

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'U.S. empire has not defeated
Puerto Rican people'

— PAGE 8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Workers step up resistance to bosses, from Indonesia to U.S.

Antigovernment protests swell in Indonesia

BY MEGAN ARNEY

After weeks of mounting antigovernment protests by students throughout Indonesia, the Suharto regime's cops opened fire on 3,000 protesters in the capital city of Jakarta May 12, killing six youths and wounding at least 16 others.

The protests, which began in response to Indonesia's economic crisis, are increasingly demanding the resignation of Suharto, who has ruled with an iron fist for 32 years. A sharp hike in fuel, transportation, and electricity prices on May 1 — austerity measures dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) — triggered a nationwide ex-

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Top: Students demanding Suharto resign are attacked by riot cops in Jakarta, Indonesia, May 7. Above: picket line at Titan Tire May 11.

Titan Tire strikers call solidarity rally in Iowa

BY RAY PARSONS

DES MOINES, Iowa — "We Will Win!" is the theme of the solidarity rally being organized by United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 164 for May 16 in Des Moines. "All trade unionists and friends of labor are asked to turn out," a flyer explains. The 650 unionists went on strike against Titan Tire at midnight April 30 over forced overtime, pension benefits and health insurance coverage for retirees, and to end two-tier wages.

Titan Tire is a manufacturer of agricultural, industrial, and military tires and is a subsidiary of Titan International, a leading producer of off-highway wheels.

More than 400 USWA members and supporters held a lively rally in front of the Titan plant when the strike began, giving night-shift workers a rousing welcome as they walked out at midnight.

Since then, 24-hour picketing has been organized at four

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Triumphant workers return to Australia docks

BY LINDA HARRIS
AND JOANNE KUNIAANSKY

SYDNEY, Australia — At 9:30 p.m. on May 7 more than 500 supporters, including members of many different unions, families, and students, lined the street leading to the main gate at Patrick's Port Botany terminal in Sydney. Banners declared "Victory to the Workers!" The crowd chanted, "MUA, Here to Stay!" as wharfies, returning to work one month after being sacked, walked on a red carpet through the gates.

Earlier that evening, at 6 p.m., a large crowd of supporters cheered as Australian Council of Trade Unions president Jennie George led the first workers through the gates at Patrick's East Swanson Dock in Melbourne.

The crowd at Sydney's Port Botany was addressed by Maritime Union of Australia New South Wales Branch Secretary Robert Coombs, who explained that while the return to work is a real victory for the union, the fight is far from over. He said that Patrick continues to act aggressively, putting obstacles in the way of the union.

Earlier that day MUA officials agreed to

Continued on Page 3

Chicago rail workers strike over seniority

BY MARILEE TAYLOR
AND JOSHUA CARROLL

CHICAGO — Some 2,500 rail workers, members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (BMWE), struck the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad May 12. These workers are responsible for laying and maintaining tracks, railroad bridges, and buildings. The walkout was in response to company attacks aimed at gutting their seniority system and work rules.

Picket lines here went up at about 5:00 a.m. at the freight yards, before first shift workers and some road crews went on duty. Union rail workers, including those in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the United Transportation Union, refused to cross the picket lines. In La Crosse, Wisconsin, road crews turned around and left after being called for trains and encountering the pickets at the yard. In the Chicago area yards, first shift workers and road crews honored the picket lines. Rail bosses forced those coming off of the midnight shift to continue working, but were unable to move any trains. The yards were shut tight.

The striking locals — from Nebraska, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, Iowa, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota — are made up of workers on the former Burlington Northern properties of what is now the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe. All-

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Sinn Fein meeting marked by resolve to intensify fight for a free Ireland

BY ANNE HOWIE
AND PETE CLIFFORD

DUBLIN, Ireland — A thunderous 10-minute standing ovation from 1,400 delegates and observers greeted four Irish republican prisoners, known as the "Balcombe Street Four," as they joined the platform at the May 10 Ard Fheis (national conference) of Sinn Fein. They had just secured temporary release to attend the meeting, having served 23 years in British jails. Their reception symbolized what Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness described as a "sense of vibrancy and life" he had never seen before in the republican movement.

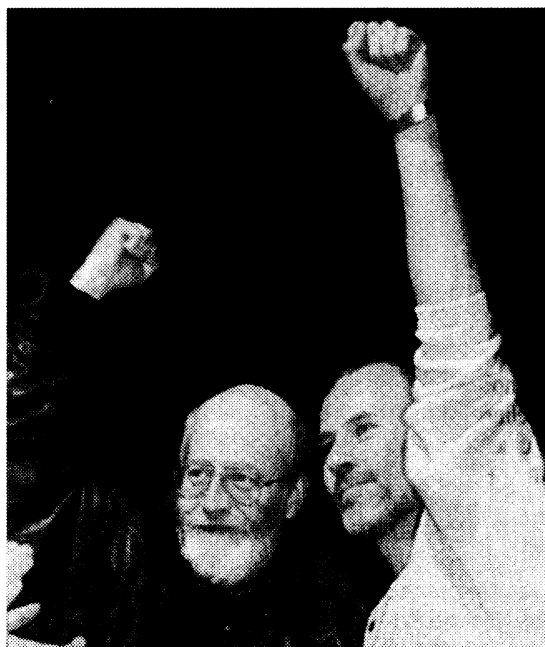
Sinn Fein is the political party leading the fight for a united Ireland, free of British occupation and domination. The Ard Fheis overwhelmingly endorsed the leadership proposal to cast a Yes vote in the May 22 referendum in the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland on the "Northern Ireland Agreement." The agreement was negotiated in talks that included Sinn Fein earlier this year but has not been signed by the nationalist

party. The delegates also voted to alter the party's constitution to take seats in the assembly to be elected in Northern Ireland. These decisions were taken, as the reception of the prisoners marked, with resolve to intensify the struggle for self-determination.

The four men who were welcomed on the stage were imprisoned in 1975 after a six-day gun siege by armed police on Balcombe Street, London. Their sentences for carrying out a bombing campaign totaled more than 2,000 years. Just a few months ago British home secretary Jack Straw had insisted they would spend the rest of their lives in jail. The week before the Sinn Fein conference, they won transfers to Portlaoise prison in the Republic of Ireland, and under the terms of the agreement will be eligible for release in the next two years.

The four were among 27 political

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Republican prisoners Hugh Doherty, left, and Padriac Wilson get standing ovation at Ard Fheis.

Israeli government balks at West Bank pullout

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has once again balked at implementing the Oslo accords, which call for Tel Aviv's gradual return of West Bank lands to Palestinians. An Israeli government official said May 8 the premier would not attend a Mideast "peace summit" in Washington the following week, after Netanyahu and U.S. envoy Dennis Ross failed to reach agreement on an Israeli troop withdrawal. "It will be a very dangerous situation, and we will be heading toward confrontation," said Nabil Abourdenh, an adviser to Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat.

Inside Israel, political polarization is growing. Right-wing groups have threatened to seek Netanyahu's ouster if he authorizes any pullouts beyond 9 percent of the West Bank. Hundreds of Israelis who oppose the Netanyahu administration's provocative settlement expansion in the West Bank have been in the streets in recent weeks.

The accords signed in 1995 by the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization stipulated a troop withdrawal beginning September 1996 followed by two more pullouts in 12 months' time that would leave Palestinians in control of as much as 91 percent of the land in the West Bank. Tel Aviv has not met a single withdrawal deadline. The Clinton administration has asked Tel Aviv to withdraw its troops from 13 percent of the West Bank.

Israeli troops bomb Lebanon

Israeli troops and the Tel Aviv-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) shelled a Lebanese village May 8, wounding three civilians in Mansouri, 10 miles south of the city of Tyre. They claimed to be responding to an alleged guerrilla attack that killed an SLA militiaman earlier that day. Hezbollah guerrillas, who are fighting to end the 13-year occupation of southern Lebanon by the Zionist regime, have launched numerous attacks on Israel's military outposts.

India nurses demand pay raise

Nurses in New Delhi, India, picketed the Health Ministry headquarters May 7 shouting

Oil workers reach out for support in Texas

Eighty Crown refinery workers and supporters participated in the Strawberry Festival parade May 9 in Pasadena, Texas. The locked-out members of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers were joined by members of the United Farm Workers who are fighting to win support for California strawberry workers. Teamsters and sugar refinery workers also joined the parade.

ing antigovernment slogans, as negotiations between the nurses union and government officials failed. Medical services up to that point were paralyzed. Nurses in the Delhi Nurses Union (DNU), who began their strike two days earlier, are demanding the government fulfill an agreement it made last September to raise wages. A DNU spokesperson said nurses in New Delhi have the lowest pay scales in the country for their qualifications. New Delhi authorities claim they are open to holding talks, but say they have ruled out any raises.

S. Korea: workers confront gov't

Lee Kab Yong, president of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, which organizes 600,000 workers in the country's

largest industries, announced plans for further strike actions to protest rising unemployment in south Korea. More than 6.5 percent of the workforce is now unemployed, by official figures, and the number is being swollen by companies going out of business under the blows of the sharp financial crisis there. On May 1, more than 20,000 workers and students took to the streets demanding an end to layoffs. Newly elected president Kim Dae Jung, who was a critic of previous regimes' antiworker policies, ordered a crackdown on militant protest actions, in which strikers have defended themselves in pitched battles against attacks by riot police.

The rulers in Seoul are sweating as the labor resistance threatens to scare off foreign investors. Following the May 1 protests, the Korea Stock exchange fell 14.7 points — the lowest since the currency collapse in December of last year. At that time, the International Monetary Fund intervened to offer Seoul a \$60 billion "rescue" package, with severe austerity demands attached.

N. Korea: U.S. lies about nukes

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has threatened to halt its implementation of a 1994 accord on nuclear power, citing Washington's refusal to fulfill its part of the deal. The U.S. government has accused north Korea of using a nuclear reactor to produce nuclear fuel for weapons. The reactor was used to produce electricity. Pyongyang agreed to dismantle it, provided Washington, Tokyo, and Seoul build two

new reactors that produce less nuclear fuel. The U.S. government agreed to provide 500,000 tons of fuel oil per year until the first of the two reactors was completed, ostensibly in 2003. North Korean officials complain the project is far behind schedule and that Washington has fallen behind shipments of fuel. "All facts show that the DPRK has gone farther in implementing the agreement whereas the U.S. side is not sincerely fulfilling its obligation," read a statement in the Korean Central News Agency. It said authorities were considering the idea "that the DPRK should no longer lend an ear to the empty promises of the U.S. side, but open and readjust the frozen nuclear facilities and do everything our own way." Thomas Pickering, U.S. undersecretary of state, complained that such a move would be "regrettable and lamentable."

U.S. courts OK more snooping

State and federal courts gave government agents permission for 1,186 wiretaps in 1997 — a 3 percent increase over the previous year — according to a report compiled by the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts. More than 70 percent of the taps were done in the name of "narcotics investigations." This does not count the cases where one of the parties being secretly recorded consents to the snooping.

Living conditions worsen for oppressed nationalities in N.Y.

A study recently released by a research center at the New York University School of Law found that people who are oppressed nationalities and immigrants residing in New York City, particularly Blacks and Dominicans, face worsening housing conditions. According to the report, the percentages of tenants who live with three or more serious problems like broken heating or plumbing, no bathroom or kitchen, and rat infestation are as follows for different groups: Dominicans, 34 percent; Puerto Ricans born in the United States, 29 percent; U.S.-born Blacks, 27 percent; Puerto Ricans born on the island, 23 percent; Caribbean and African immigrants, 22 percent; and Mexicans and Central and South Americans, 20 percent. The study also reported that 28 percent of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi immigrants live in overcrowded housing — 12 times more than U.S.-born whites.

In related news, a report compiled by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development found that the number of people nationally who earn below-median income and pay more than 50 percent of their earnings to a landlord rose by 370,000 in a four-year period. In that same period the number of low-rent apartments decreased by 900,000. The number of those needing housing assistance climbed by 9 percent, the report stated. About 5.3 million families who rent — one out of seven — need assistance. The federal government has allocated no new funds for housing assistance since 1995.

—BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

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Australian wharfies

Continued from front page

halt moves in the Federal Court to have Patrick security guards removed from the docks. Instead, an agreement was struck with Patrick requiring the guards, who used batons and dogs to forcibly remove the unionists on April 7, to remain a safe distance from the returning workers.

Patrick has labeled some 25 workers "unsuitable," accusing them of threatening terminal bosses and their families. They have been blocked from returning to work. The list includes wharfies from Townsville, Brisbane, and Sydney. The MUA is fighting to have them reinstated.

A backlog of 10,000 containers at Patrick's terminals are testament to the effectiveness of the picket lines during the month-long dispute. The bulk of the containers are on the docks in Sydney and Melbourne.

"Ships are turning around pretty quickly," Peter Blight, an MUA member at Patrick's East Swanson Dock, told the *Militant* after a few days back at work. "The biggest problem, as it always has been, is management. They're pinpricking us—but the attitude of the workers is buoyant." He described conditions when he returned to work: "The lockers had all been broken into and a lot of personal things stolen." The departing scabs had done a lot of damage to the cranes and other equipment, "anything to slow us down," he said. Patrick was forced to remove its scabs prior to reinstating MUA members to their jobs.

In Newcastle and Port Adelaide wharfies are back on the picket lines. Patrick has announced that seven of its terminals including Newcastle and Adelaide would remain closed. The disputes in those two ports are over ships that Patrick has subcontracted to the largest stevedoring company in Australia, CTAL, a subsidiary of P&O Ports. MUA

members who work for P&O have joined the picket lines.

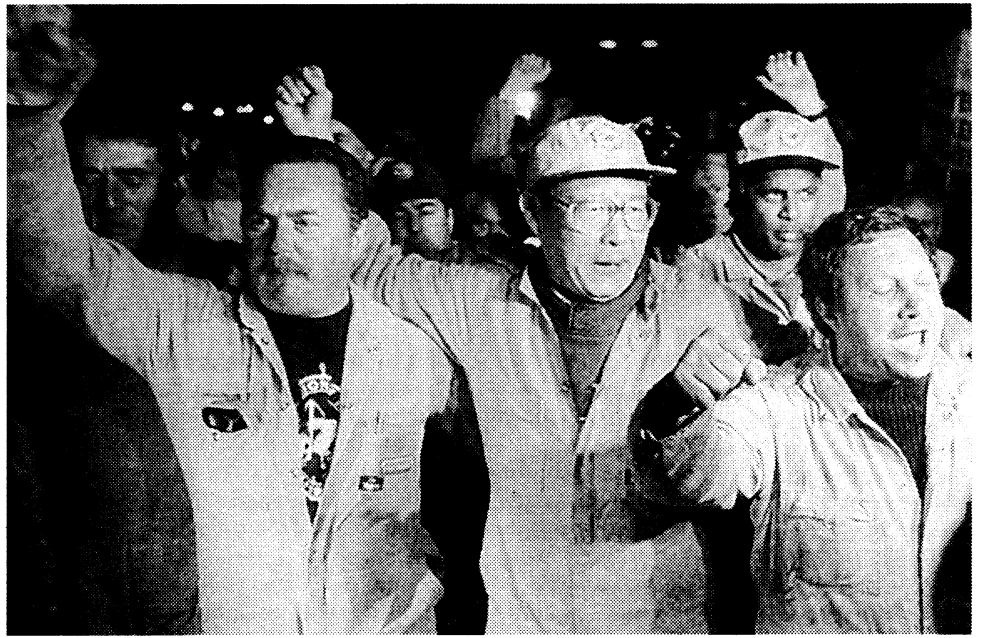
P&O Ports currently controls 70 percent of the workload across Australia's wharves—up from 55 percent prior to the dispute. Enterprise agreement negotiations between the MUA and P&O were due to start on May 11, with the bosses demanding massive job cuts and work-practice changes.

Further fallout from the fight waged by the MUA and supporters has been the release to the press of documents that tie Patrick's chairman, Christopher Corrigan, and the office of Workplace Relations Minister Peter Reith to the attempt last year to train Australian ex-military personnel in Dubai to be strikebreakers on the wharves.

When the Dubai scheme failed, nonunion labor was introduced on Melbourne's Webb Dock by an outfit set up by the National Farmers Federation (NFF). On May 10 a dozen farmers from East Gippsland, Victoria, drove down to an MUA barbecue at Webb Dock to donate 200 kilos of meat in solidarity with the wharfies and to show their opposition to the antiunion actions of the NFF.

Up to 100,000 people led by sacked Patrick workers and other members of the MUA marched in Melbourne on May 6 in solidarity with the MUA and in opposition to the Howard government. This was the biggest union march since 1992 protests against the Victoria state government's antiunion laws.

Workers from more than 50 unions staging a one-day statewide strike joined the rally with banners supporting the wharfies, like "Meatworkers support the MUA." Many at the rally were workers who had been or are currently involved in fights against their own bosses. A number of rank-and-file unionists addressed the crowd and spoke of attacks on cleaners, teachers, and



Sacked Maritime Union of Australia members march back to wharves victorious at East Swanson in Melbourne after a court ordered Patrick Stevedores to reinstate them.

public sector workers.

At the rally an official of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union called for construction workers to strike on May 20 in defense of their conditions, against the Howard government's industrial relations policy, and in support of the MUA.

The Melbourne protest was another confirmation of the widespread support for the MUA. At the picket line on Melbourne's Webb Dock, Paul, an MUA mechanic with 21 years' service who did not want his surname used, explained, "The government and employers weren't counting on [the MUA getting] much community support. They thought they'd go in quickly and get a moral win. The attack on the MUA is not the political winner Howard thought it was going to be. He thought he could do a Margaret Thatcher and say he busted the MUA," Paul continued, referring to the former prime minister of Britain. "But he's shot himself

in the foot. This has strengthened the union movement. This dispute has cemented a lot of people's camaraderie. They know they'll never break us because we've been toe to toe on the picket line with each other."

U.S. dock workers, members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, refused May 9 to handle a ship loaded by Patrick's scabs in Australia. Some 1,500 longshoremen and supporters joined a picket line at Los Angeles's Matson terminal (see photo story on page 15). As of May 11, the ship was still sitting in the harbor with its cargo of frozen meat and other products, as union members refused to unload it.

Linda Harris is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union. Malcolm McAllister in Auckland, New Zealand, and Ron Poulsen in Sydney contributed to this article.

Australian gov't doubles troops in Bougainville

BY BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia —The Australian government has more than doubled its military presence on the Pacific island of Bougainville in recent weeks. Expanding from around 100 troops to around 250, its forces now include at least three helicopters.

These so-called unarmed peacekeepers are being deployed as the government in Canberra seeks to reestablish its neocolonial domination over the island after a nine-year war for independence led by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). Canberra, the former colonial power in both Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Bougainville, has been the PNG government's chief backer as it sought to defeat the independence movement on the mineral-rich island.

With the signing of a "permanent cease-fire" April 30 in Arawa, the capital of Bougainville, the Australian regime has taken command from the New Zealand government of the imperialist-led military intervention force on the island. Wellington provided the bulk of a "Truce Monitoring Group" of up to 320 soldiers present on Bougainville since November 1997. The new Australian-commanded "Peace Monitoring Group" includes only 30 soldiers from New Zealand, with 15 each from Fiji and Vanuatu.

The cease-fire between the Papua New Guinea government and the majority of fighters for Bougainville independence is part of a so-called peace process brokered by the New Zealand government in Wellington over the past year. Its intervention followed the battlefield defeat of the PNG army in late 1996, and an army mutiny, backed by mass protests, which brought down the PNG government of Julius Chan in March 1997.

Canberra resented the New Zealand government's role of "neutral peacemaker" in Bougainville. Australian defense minister Ian McLachlan declared November 6 of last year that "only Australia... has the resources, personnel, and equipment to make a large, possibly long-term, commitment to support peace on Bougainville." Canberra has promised \$A100 million (US\$637) in aid over the next five years, including to reestablish a police force.

Francis Ona, the central leader of the BRA, who did not participate in the peace

talks leading to the cease-fire, denounced the contingent of Australian troops as "an invasion." He declared May 1 that the "Australia, New Zealand and PNG soldiers' presence on Bougainville is a continuous threat, an act of aggression and provocation."

"Should any foreign soldiers enter" the areas under his forces' control, "they will be committing acts of provocation" and will be "shot on sight," the pro-independence leader warned.

Ona has been demonized in the Australian big-business press as a violent "fanatic" for this statement. His May 2 message of solidarity to Maritime Union of Australia members sacked by Patrick Stevedores, however, received no publicity.

Most other BRA leaders have opposed Ona's stand. Canberra and Wellington have organized large contingents from both the BRA and the PNG-appointed Bougainville Transitional Government to take part in three rounds of talks in New Zealand. Many have also taken part in a series of "reconciliation" meetings, observed by the Truce Monitoring Group, involving BRA fighters and members of the PNG-organized Resistance militia.

At the ceremony marking the signing of the cease-fire, Sam Kauona, the BRA's military commander, declared, "Today marks the end of the war on Bougainville. I am happy that we have achieved peace. We will not give anyone a chance to spoil it."

Joseph Kabui, until now the vice president of the pro-independence Bougainville Interim Government (BIG), of which Ona has been the designated president, added, as he signed the cease-fire, "Francis Ona must hear the cry of our women and follow suit."

The differences within the BRA leadership came to a head publicly in the leadup to the cease-fire ceremony. Ona called a conference that was held April 15-17 at Pakia, his base village near the giant Australian-owned Panguna copper and gold mine, which has been shut down since 1988 by the rebellion. As 300 supporters declared they did not want to put down their guns, Ona called for an indefinite postponement of the cease-fire and a referendum on independence. Under the cease-fire agreement negotiated in New Zealand in January 1998, a "reconciliation government" is due to be voted in later this year.

Ona's meeting was boycotted by Kabui

and other BRA-BIG leaders, who issued a statement April 23 "to assure ... that the cease-fire document to officially end fighting" would be signed as scheduled. "All parties to the war," Kabui said, "have endured so much blood and tears that the fruitless results of a war can no longer be entertained."

The night before the cease-fire ceremony a delegation of BRA-BIG leaders, led by Kabui, held talks with PNG government negotiator John Kaputin on the Australian warship *Tobruk*, anchored in Arawa harbor. They sought agreement for the demilitarization of Arawa, the closing of the main PNG army base at Loloho, and the rescinding of the PNG army deployment order. Kaputin flatly refused to consider the demand over Loloho. His proposal to pass the other two demands on to the central PNG government, within a week, was accepted.

The cease-fire ceremony was attended by PNG prime minister Bill Skate, along with Australian foreign minister Alexander Downer, New Zealand foreign minister Donald McKinnon, and three United Nations officials. One thousand people from across Bougainville also took part.

Responding to statements by Ona that Canberra's chief concern was the reopening of the Panguna mine, Downer said, as he arrived in PNG April 29, "We have a far greater interest in there being peace in the

region." McKinnon added later, in response to the same question, that "some day the mine may open but it will probably be a decade away. Everyone knows it will cost US\$500 million to reopen."

However, writing in the May 9-10 *Weekend Australian*, Brian Woodley reflected contrasting views of the Australian rulers when he alleged that many BRA fighters "are desperate to return to work ... preferably in newborn copper, gold, oil and gas projects," and are prepared to "strike against" Ona "to secure the peace."

Skate declared on the Australian SBS "Dateline" program March 28 that Bougainville is "an integral part of Papua New Guinea," and that "independence is nonnegotiable." He also rejected the withdrawal of the PNG army from Bougainville, which is part of the cease-fire agreement.

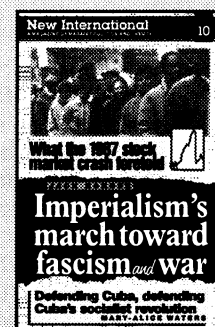
"To withdraw the force completely," he declared, would be "a defeat for the national government. Our presence and authority must be felt on the ground."

Meanwhile, the scale of the social and economic crisis unfolding in Papua New Guinea has been registered by the crash of the PNG currency, the kina, in recent months in face of a "defunct" export sector.

Bob Aiken is a member of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union.

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Workers' struggles propel revolutionizing of Pathfinder book production

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

As the *Militant* went to press this week, supporters of the communist movement in the San Francisco Bay Area were completing formatting the electronic page layouts of the introduction, 11 chapters, and appendix of *The Revolution Betrayed* — *What is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky. Within a week, the last portion of the text — the index — will also be put into electronic format. The digital files will then be used by the staffs of Pathfinder and its print shop to reprint the book through advanced computer-to-plate technology.

One of the companies that have put in bids to sell this equipment to the print shop has agreed that its machinery will be used for a test run, to produce all the necessary printing plates for *The Revolution Betrayed* directly from the electronic files. This includes the book's six-color cover, which is also being digitized through copy dot scanning — one of the methods being considered for this conversion.

The Revolution Betrayed — due for delivery the first week of June — is the first Pathfinder book to be produced in this new digital manner.

Step-up in workers' resistance

The transformation of Pathfinder book production now under way is needed to respond to the new openings to win a hearing for revolutionary ideas among more workers, farmers, and youth as the class struggle broadens.

"On April 30, 650 workers struck Titan Tires," said Gaetan Whiston, in a May 6 letter to local fractions of socialist workers in the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). Whiston, a USWA member in Minneapolis, is the organizer of the national steering committee that leads the work of socialists in that union. "This is an important fight," Whiston continued. "It is not

only part of a trend of combativity we have witnessed by workers throughout the tire industry, such as the recent Uniroyal strike, but it's also totally part of the increased resistance within the labor movement."

Whiston pointed to a report by socialist workers in a USWA-organized plant in Des Moines who had consistently sold the *Militant* and Pathfinder books at Titan plant gates leading up to the walkout. When the strike broke out they were already recognized as fellow fighters among unionists there and they helped organize solidarity. This is a good example to emulate, he said.

"At our last national fraction meeting we discussed the bottoming out of the retreat of our class," Whiston noted. "Today we can confidently say that the retreat has bottomed out. What is unfolding is the acceleration of working-class resistance to conditions that we face in the work place and to those the bosses are trying to impose. The recent Caterpillar fight, the fight at Case Corp., the strike in Macedonia, Ohio, by young McDonald's workers, the stepped-up guerrilla actions by airline workers from Northwest to TWA, and now the strike at Titan Tire are examples of the types of flash points that confirm this new resistance. This is part of what is stirring internationally within our class from the Australian Wharfies to the general strike in Denmark.

"These new openings to deepen our propaganda work, to bring communist politics to our co-workers, and to be part of and to initiate solidarity actions through the union are available to all our fractions."

Reports in this issue on working-class struggles and the response by fighting workers to the *Militant* and Pathfinder books confirm Whiston's point. Any revolutionary-minded fighter can literally walk to join struggles near their neighborhood or workplace in most cities in the United States and other imperialist centers.

Other social classes are also sensing this sea change in working-class politics. During sales visits to bookshops, libraries, and university stores in the Seattle area May 4-8, socialist workers sold 89 Pathfinder books. Among the top ten sellers was *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes. "In two of these stores, the buyer had circled the book in the catalog before we got there," said Pathfinder business manager Sara Lobman, who too part in the Seattle sales trip. "We are not the only ones who have noticed the increased resistance."

Revolutionizing book production

To meet the demand for Pathfinder books, the publisher and its print shop must revolutionize book production methods. The current photo offset technology used in Pathfinder's printshop is too labor intensive and costly to keep pace.

This challenge was presented by Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*, at a regional socialist conference in Seattle January 24-25.

Supporters of the communist movement

in the San Francisco Bay Area — a number of whom attended that gathering — responded quickly to the challenge, agreeing to be the organizing center for a worldwide effort to not only scan and proofread Pathfinder books but format the digitized manuscripts into finished electronic pages. Since February, the project has been organized by a steering committee of four volunteers in the Bay Area, headed by Ruth Cheney.

"We now have about 96 volunteers signed up," said Cheney in a telephone interview from her home in Oakland, California, May 13. "Over the last month, we have been organizing them into three departments according to skill, regardless of where in the world people live." Communications are done mostly by e-mail.

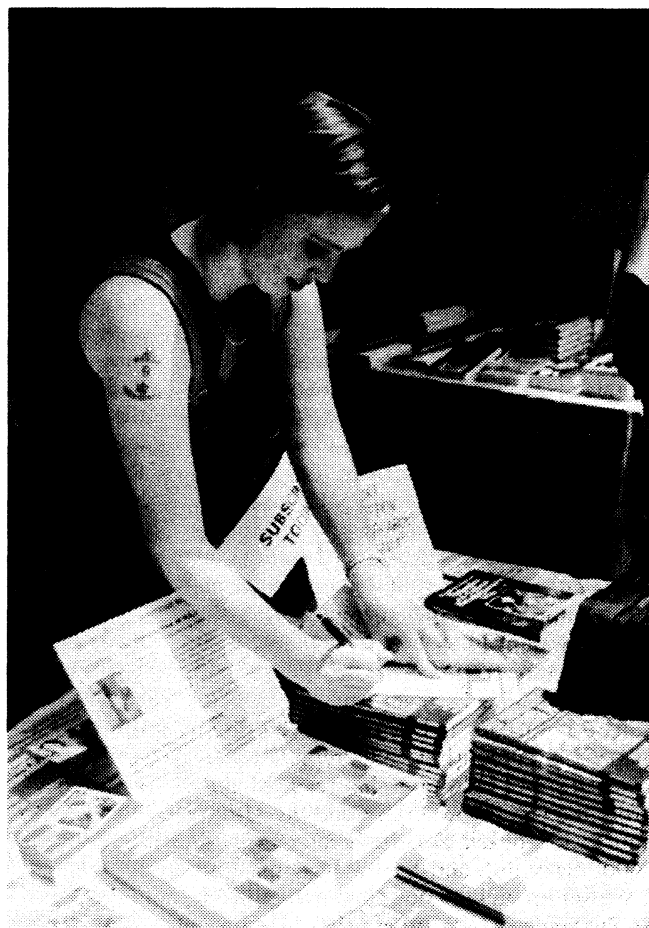
About 15 volunteers are being trained to scan books and turn them into digital files. The training includes learning the scanning techniques mastered by Bay Area steering committee member Tom Tomasko that result in an average of only one error per five pages of scanned text. "This is the key skill that we are working on right now to advance rapidly," Cheney said. "We are not close yet to what is needed in this first phase of the process to get a production line going."

After the digitized manuscripts are stripped of most errors by "massaging," they are sent back to the organizing center in the Bay Area that farms them out to volunteers for proofreading. Over 50 volunteers will soon be correcting the scanned and massaged text, Cheney said. The majority will do the first read of the electronic manuscript. Only a handful have so far been identified as potential second readers, who will do the final read and corrections. "We insist on taking time to find and train those who can maintain the high quality standards Pathfinder is known for in each skill."

Only three volunteers are now being trained to format the proofed and corrected manuscripts into their final electronic form. Several more have offered to help with this task. The first formatter is Bay Area steering committee member Jerry Gardner, an electrician.

Wellsprings of talent and skills

"A good number of Pathfinder supporters had working experience for two years in scanning and an even larger number in proofreading books," Gardner said in a telephone interview. "But I've had to learn formatting from scratch." Gardner did all of the work in formatting *The Revolution Betrayed*. "The experience was a bit of a nightmare. But going through it, we learned quite a lot that will make training others smoother," Gardner said that in the process



Militant/Carole Lesnick
Young Socialists member Heather Martin sells *Militant* subscriptions and Pathfinder books at Los Angeles book fair in April. Having these books in print is essential as working-class struggles spread.

of trying to solve technical problems, the Bay Area organizers have begun to discover a number of volunteers with talent and skills who know this part of the production process through their jobs. Robbie Scherr, for example, an SWP supporter in Seattle, works in desktop publishing of books. She helped a lot in overcoming a number of the initial hurdles Gardner encountered in formatting *The Revolution Betrayed*.

The work of the volunteers is now completely tied to Pathfinder's reprint program. Only 18 copies of *The Revolution Betrayed* are currently left in Pathfinder's stock. At the average rate of sales over the last year, this stock will be depleted by the beginning of June. The digitized reprint will thus be used immediately to begin filling orders. Volunteers are now working on 32 books. (Those who want to volunteer can contact Cheney at 102616.3037@compuserve.com)

At the same time the staffs of Pathfinder and its print shop are preparing the ground for using computer-to-plate technology to produce printing plates for presses directly from the finished digital files. Doing so will enable print shop workers to bypass highly skilled and time consuming processes, such as stripping film and burning plates manually. This reorganization will allow Pathfinder to keep its entire arsenal of 350 titles in print with a smaller shop and at a lower cost for short runs.

Putting the books in electronic format also makes it easier and quicker to produce them in larger and more readable type, rather than constantly reproducing old and sometimes broken print, said print shop director Chris Hoepfner. The new reprint of *Revolutionary Continuity: Birth of the Communist Movement 1918-1922* by Farrell Dobbs is a case in point. The book was digitized by print shop workers. It grew from its earlier 240 pages with small and squeezed print to 330 pages with type friendlier to the eye. "The book is now more accessible to fighting workers who need it," Hoepfner said.

Militant Fund goes way over the top

BY JON ERWAY
AND MARTIN KOPPEL

NEWARK, New Jersey — We reached the goal — and went over! As the *Militant* goes to press, supporters of the socialist press have raised more than \$127,000 or 116 percent of the \$110,000 goal. This is also well above the cumulative sum of \$119,000 in local goals.

A substantial amount was collected in the last days of the drive, as *Militant* supporters pushed, both to approach more readers for contributions and to collect pledges already made. The response was enthusiastic and made the success possible.

From Boston, Militant Fund director M.J. Rahn reports that "we ended up raising \$200 more than our \$6,000 goal." Among other contributors, two workers on

the railroad — one works at Conrail, the other at Amtrak — both gave contributions on the job, and both also ended up buying copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. And a 29-year-old worker who has attended classes given by the Socialist Workers Party on the *Communist Manifesto* donated \$250 and bought nine issues of *New Internationalist* — almost a complete set.

In Birmingham, Alabama, communist workers have collected contributions to the fund from 20 co-workers at three different factories organized by the Steelworkers union. Eleven workers made donations at Meadowcraft, a furniture plant; two workers at Sloss, a coke plant; and seven workers at a US Steel plant in the area. Six of the 20 are Mexican-born workers who have read *Perspectiva Mundial* and expressed their

respect for the socialist magazine's accurate reporting on world politics and its uncompromising defense of immigrant rights.

From Seattle, Nan Bailey reports that they contacted longtime subscribers to the *Militant* who are not organized members of the communist movement and received an excellent response. Some 29 such readers contributed a total of about \$3,000.

Militant supporters in several cities have said that they still have a few outstanding pledges to collect, even in places where they have made their goals. Please send in those checks too! Every contribution will help.

The *Militant* is now fielding a reporting team of worker-correspondents from Sweden and the United States to Denmark. That's what the Militant Fund will continue to make possible.

Militant Fund Drive March 14 - May 10

CITY/COUNTRY	GOAL	PAID	%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Manchester	400	652	163%
London	600	579	97%
UK Total	1,000	1,231	123%
NEW ZEALAND			
Wellington	115	181	157%
Auckland	930	1,166	125%
Christchurch	700	675	96%
N.Z. Total	1,745	2,022	116%
UNITED STATES			
Miami	2,850	3,754	132%
Los Angeles	9,000	11,505	128%
Washington, D.C.	3,800	4,518	119%
Houston	6,000	6,768	113%
Seattle	7,000	7,731	110%
Philadelphia	4,000	4,371	109%
Pittsburgh	5,000	5,390	108%
Cleveland	3,000	3,162	105%
Detroit	4,200	4,353	104%
San Francisco	10,000	10,325	103%
Boston	6,000	6,185	103%
New York	14,000	14,120	101%
Chicago	11,000	11,033	100%
Newark	8,500	8,523	100%
Twin Cities, MN	7,000	7,016	100%
Des Moines	2,500	2,505	100%
Atlanta	3,200	3,200	100%
Birmingham	2,500	2,500	100%
Other	0	1,013	
United States	109,550	117,972	108%
CANADA			
Montreal	1,517	1,524	100%
Toronto	2,414	2,807	116%
Vancouver	1,000	1,000	100%
Canada Total	5,000	5,331	107%
AUSTRALIA			
	650	652	100%
FRANCE			
	220	190	86%
ICELAND			
	150	110	73%
SWEDEN			
	700	145	21%
INT'L TOTAL:	119,015	127,653	116%
SHOULD BE:	110,000		

More than 400 subscribe to 'Militant' in last week of drive

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* (PM) ended the sales drive with a bang, selling 402 subscriptions to the *Militant* during the eighth and final week of the campaign to win new readers to the socialist press. The final results are 1,364 *Militant* subscriptions, 410 PM subs, and 620 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

While the campaign fell short of the goal by just 3 percent, socialist workers, members of the Young Socialists, and other supporters have responded to fights by working people with sales of the socialist press at airports, shipping docks, factory gates, on the job, at political events, on campuses, and in working-class communities. Sales have gone up, resulting in higher bundle orders and extra orders by the distributors of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Since the beginning of the year bundle orders for the *Militant* have risen by 50 percent.

"We organized a plant gate sale at Maple Leaf Foods to talk to ex-strikers in Burlington, Ontario, where we sold 14 papers in the pouring rain," reports Joanne Pritchard from Toronto. "We held up a that read 'Meatpackers Fightback from the U.S. to Alberta: Read the *Militant*.'" Pointing to more working-class battles heating up, Pritchard said some 2,000 carpenters and drywallers demanding a wage increase have set up picket lines at construction sites in Toronto.

Stu Singer, a rail worker in Washington, D.C., reports, "We sold one subscription to the *Militant* and one copy of *New International* no. 4 at a May 12 meeting of about 100 Black farmers who attended a hearing on their suit against the Department of Agriculture. Eddie Carthan, a veteran fighter and former mayor of Tchula, Mississippi, bought the copy of *New International*. Eddie said he reads the *Militant* regularly — he has had a sub for 20 years."

Carthan has not been farming for a few years but helped organize a meeting in Mississippi of 300 Black farmers two weeks ago to support this class-action suit against the government. About 30 farmers who attended that meeting — from Mississippi, Alabama, and South Carolina — came to Washington for the hearing. Other farmers who bought copies of the *Militant* were from Louisiana, where they are planning a statewide meeting to involve others in this fight.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

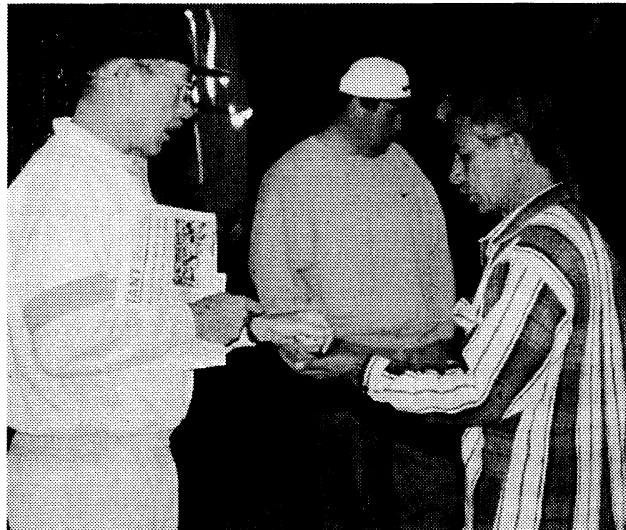
DES MOINES — Supporters of the *Militant* in Des Moines organized a regional sales team in the Midwest going to five states in 10 days. We visited eight packinghouses and sold 11 *Militant* subscriptions, 12 PM subs, 60 copies of the *Militant*, 45 PMs, two copies of *New International*, and eight Pathfinder titles. There were many skirmishes in all these plants and the workers were eager to learn about the "illegally terminated" Caterpillar workers winning their jobs backed, the UAW members' struggle at Case, and the Titan Tire strike. Many packinghouse workers were interested in the McDonald's workers strike, since some of them have worked at fast food joints or still do as a second job.

The sales team campaigned for the Iowa socialist slate: Tom Alter for governor, Maggie Trowe for U.S. Senate, Ray Parsons for agriculture secretary, and Amanda Ulman for Iowa State Assembly. We began with a plant-gate sale at the Oscar Mayer plant in Davenport, Iowa, April 24 where we sold 10 copies of the *Militant*. Those workers, who had just signed a contract that will increase their wages by \$0.80 to more than \$12 per hour, bought 10 *Militants*.

In Sioux Falls, South Dakota, we sold at the plant gate of the John Morrell plant and learned of a visit by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents, where they waited outside the plant and arrested 18 workers.

Later in the week we drove to Columbus Junction, Iowa, and found the IBP plant there. The town of 1,000 people has a little main street with two Mexican stores and a Mexican restaurant. There we bought a local Spanish-language paper that announced a League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) statewide conference in nearby Muscatine two days later. We sold at the IBP plant, to an almost all-Mexican workforce. There is no union now at the plant, and IBP did its best to defeat the last UFCW effort a few years ago. There have been no raids recently, but workers told us of being threatened with deportation when they tried to get workers compensation for carpal tunnel syndrome.

We went to the LULAC conference in Muscatine, attended by more than 50 people. The presence of a handful of workers, from IBP and a few other plants, added a lot to the conference. We were permitted to set up a campaign table,



Mike Downs (left) sells *Militant* at Los Angeles port

which helped in selling five *Militant* subs and a *New International*. In Marshalltown, Iowa, two of our Swift co-workers joined us for a class on the Mexican revolution that one of them presented.

BY WILLIE REID

DETROIT — Last week we sold 69 copies of the *Militant* and in the last four days we sold 13 *Militant* subscriptions, one PM sub, and five copies of *New International*. On May 6 we met and drew up a daily battle plan to fight for the goals. Supporters took days off work to campaign on campuses in the region, sell the socialist press in working-class communities, follow up on 24 people who bought copies of the paper, and sent three special teams to talk to Northwest Airlines workers.

The highlight of the week was sales at the anti-KKK rally and the National Black Farmers Conference on May 9. The anti-Klan rally attracted more than 500 people, where we sold 14 copies of the *Militant*, four subscriptions, and five Pathfinder titles. Some 400 people attended the Black farmers meeting in the city, where participants purchased eight copies of the *Militant*, two subscriptions, one *New International*, and 14 Pathfinder titles.

Two supporters who are also members of the United Auto Workers stayed after work and made special arrangement with the *Militant* sales team at the plant gate that resulted in two co-workers buying subscriptions. Socialist Workers candidates Holly Harkness and Rosa Garmendia, who are meatpackers, have joined with their co-workers in a fight against the bosses in the ham boning department. They sold one *Militant* subscription and two copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* after participating in a union meeting, organizing a house meeting with their co-workers, and joining a sales team outside their plant gate after work.

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia — We sold the last *Militant* sub to reach our goal to a member of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) who is a reinstated wharfie. He has been a regular buyer of the paper at Port Botany before their fight erupted. During the course of the sales campaign *Militant* supporters sold 76 copies paper to MUA members and supporters at plant gates and on the picket lines. We sold five subscriptions on the picket lines, including three to MUA members and one to a coal miner. In the 10 weeks leading up to the mass sackings of the dock workers we organized regular sales at the plant gates at Port Botany. So when the picket lines were set up, the *Militant* was already known to a layer of MUA members.

We made a special effort to get teams to three May Day marches — in Wollongong, Newcastle, and Sydney. They were all much bigger, despite the heavy rain, than previous years. Solidarity with the MUA was the focus with spirited chants by the thousands of unionists who participated.

During the four weeks of the wharf battle, we sold 269 issues of the *Militant*. This is the highest sales ever of the *Militant* in this country.

SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE MARCH 14 – MAY 10

Week 8 should be 100%

	Militant Goal	Sold	%	PM Goal	Sold	NI Goal	Sold
New Zealand							
Christchurch	25	30	120%	1	1	8	8
Auckland	35	37	106%	2	1	8	8
Wellington	4	4	100%	1	0	1	1
N.Z. Total	64	71	111%	4	2	17	17
Sweden*	18	19	106%	6	5	12	14
Canada							
Vancouver	50	63	126%	6	7	20	16
Toronto	45	47	104%	8	5	20	24
Montreal*	25	16	64%	10	12	25	29
Canada Total	120	126	105%	24	24	65	69
Australia	16	16	100%	5	5	10	11
United States							
Los Angeles	100	121	121%	50	52	50	80
Boston	50	54	108%	20	29	40	46
Miami	45	48	107%	22	22	20	28
New York	150	155	103%	75	68	75	80
Philadelphia	35	36	103%	8	5	10	7
Houston*	40	41	103%	10	10	18	22
Washington, DC*	45	46	102%	15	15	20	24
Birmingham, AL	50	51	102%	10	11	15	10
San Francisco	80	81	101%	30	32	35	17
Detroit	40	40	100%	8	8	15	14
Atlanta*	35	34	97%	13	9	18	8
Seattle	70	64	91%	15	16	25	11
Twin Cities, MN	70	62	89%	12	9	20	11
Des Moines*	45	39	87%	25	19	25	13
Cleveland*	35	24	69%	10	10	10	4
Newark, NJ	125	80	64%	50	24	60	46
Chicago	90	57	63%	40	21	30	24
Pittsburgh	50	31	62%	3	2	15	10
Santa Cruz	5	1	20%				
U.S. Total	1160	1065	92%	416	362	501	455
United Kingdom							
London	45	50	111%	8	10	35	35
Manchester	26	10	38%	2	2	18	6
UK Total	71	60	85%	10	12	53	41
France	3	2	67%	5	0	30	12
Iceland	9	5	56%	1	0	3	1
International totals	1449	1364	94%	471	410	691	620
Goal/Should be at	1400	1400	100%	450	450	600	600

IN THE UNIONS

	IN THE UNIONS				
IAM	60	67	112%	14	11
UFCW	15	14	93%	16	15
UTU	50	46	92%	5	4
OCAW	45	29	64%	10	2
UNITE	27	17	63%	5	2
USWA	10	5	50%	12	11
U.S. total	55	27	49%	7	8
	262	205	78%	69	53
Canada					
USWA	6	7	117%	1	2
CAW*	4	3	75%		3
IAM	9	5	56%	1	0
UNITE	2	0	0%	1	0
Canada total	21	15	71%	3	2
New Zealand					
SFWU	2	1	50%		1
EU	5	2	40%		1
MWU	3	1	33%		0
N.Z. total	10	4	40%		3
United Kingdom					
RMT	3	3	100%		3
AEEU	5	1	20%		6
TGWU	5	1	20%		3
UK total	13	5	38%		12
Australia					
AMWU	3	0	0%		0
TCFU	1	0	0%		1
Australia total	4	0	0%		3

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; TCFU — Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

2,500 rail workers strike at Burlington Northern

Continued from front page

though the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railroads merged in 1994, each of the former entities continues to hold separate agreements with the BMWE.

The key issues in the strike were the railroad's attempt to slash the number of seniority districts by almost two-thirds and its attempt to change the way workers gain seniority on new positions. This would mean a geographical expansion of the areas for which individual crews of workers are responsible, forcing them to work assignments much farther from home. It would also increase the amount of time required before a worker gains seniority rights on a new position.

Around 10:30 a.m. the picket lines came down after U.S. district judge Robert Maloney of Dallas, Texas, granted the BNSF a temporary restraining order against the strike. The restraining order remains in effect until May 21, when a federal hearing will determine whether to make it a permanent injunction.

The overwhelming majority of workers interviewed, both members of the BMWE and others, felt the strike was justified. Following the work action, there has been a great deal of discussion among railworkers about how to fight for better working conditions. A number of workers have expressed the opinion that the government has no right to intervene in workers' struggles against the railroad.

Michael Rogers, a 25-year-old BMWE member, said, "This is unfair for the working class. President Clinton and Mrs. Clinton say they want parents to spend more time with their families. But how can they say that when the company reneges on an agreement, so you're forced to work for long periods of time, far away from home. And then when you fight it in the most effective way, through your union, they order you back to work?"

Marilee Taylor is a member of the United Transportation Union at the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe railroad in Chicago. Alyson Kennedy, a member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, contributed to this article.

YS leader speaks at California campuses

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY JACOB PERASSO AND SAMANTHA KERN

SAN FRANCISCO — Members of the Young Socialists in San Francisco held a meeting at Mills College on "Building an Anti-Imperialist Youth Movement Worldwide" on April 28. The meeting was part of a West Coast tour by Jack Willey, organizer of the National Executive Committee of the YS. Willey took part in a *Militant* reporting trip to Egypt and the Balkans in March.

Young Socialists publicized the meeting by setting up tables on campus the day before and day of the event. Willey helped staff the table, giving students a chance to meet him and ask questions about his trip. Over the course of the two days, Young Socialists sold four issues of the *Militant* and the Pathfinder title *Cuba for Beginners*.

Five students attended the Mills meeting, and one met with Young Socialists later to continue the discussion. At the meeting, Young Socialists members encouraged participants to attend their weekly class series on the book, *Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination*.

Willey also spoke about his recent *Militant* reporting trip at a meeting on "Russia and NATO expansion," organized by the YS at the University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC). This meeting was attended by five UCSC students. Nefta Pereda, who was among the students attending the discussion, explained that it helped clarify and give a

working-class perspective on the imperialist interests underlying the expansion of NATO. The discussion moved from topics in Eastern Europe to questions about Patrick Buchanan and ended with a discussion on defending bilingual education.

A raffle and dinner were held to finance Willey's tour. The events raised \$200.



The following is a report from the Seattle chapter of the Young Socialists on their efforts to raise money for the Young Socialists National Fund Drive. It was sent on May 10, 1998

The chapter here raised nearly \$260 through honoraria from the University of Washington, when it sponsored a speaking engagement on campus for Jack Willey as a part of his West Coast speaking tour.

At the last two *Militant* Labor Forums, and at a recent barbecue sponsored by supporters of the *Militant*, the chapter set up tables displaying items to be raffled at an event May 16, featuring a video showing of *Cuba and Angola*. The film chronicles the defeat of the South African apartheid army in Angola, and highlights the central role of more than 300,000 Cuban, internationalist volunteers who fought and gave aid in that

N.Y. forum discusses Puerto Rican struggle



Militant/Brian Taylor

Speakers at the May 8 Militant Labor Forum in Brooklyn called for Puerto Rican independence and the release of *independentista* Antonio Camacho. Celest Ulloa, a Dominican activist, spoke for the family of Camacho. She told of Camacho's rearrest two months after he was released from a U.S. prison. "They said he was treated with respect.... [He] was given no sheets in jail, then put in solitary confinement for using towels," she said. Other speakers were Evelyn Morales (speaking) and Eduardo Sánchez of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners; and Wendy Lyons (left), the Socialist Workers candidate for New York attorney general, who recently attended the conference of the Federation of Pro-Independence University Students.

struggle. The YS will also be organizing a book sale with books donated by supporters of the communist movement in Seattle.

Raffle items will include a Che Guevara

T-shirt from Cuba and a poster of fighters from the 1910 Mexican revolution. So far, sales of raffle tickets have raised \$97 towards our fund drive goal of \$400.

'Puerto Rican flag is not a joke!' say N.Y. protesters against 'Seinfeld' episode

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

NEW YORK — About 40 Puerto Rican activists and others, many of them young, assembled here in front of the NBC studio

May 13 to denounce the burning and trampling of a Puerto Rican flag and insulting comments against Puerto Ricans on an episode of the TV show *Seinfeld*.

Protesters arrived at 6:00 a.m. with rolled up banners, posters, and flags, planning to unfurl them when the NBC morning news studio camera routinely flashes through the crowd as part of the program. At showtime, 7:00 a.m., demonstrators held up large Puerto Rican flags and posters that read, "The Puerto Rican flag is not a joke!" responding to *Seinfeld*'s unapologetic explanation that the flag burning was just a joke.

"Why did he choose a Puerto Rican flag, why didn't he burn an American flag?" asked protester Eladio Quiñones. "Puerto Ricans have fought and died in this country's wars and still don't get any respect. What did we die for? Nothing. Now they use Puerto Rico as a military launching base."

Another protester, who gave his name only as Tone, said, "I am here because I am offended and outraged by the act of those so-called comedians. The stomping of the flag was no random accident, it was a symbol. I think it is time to tell people we won't tolerate this anymore — from anyone!" He mentioned that the future of Puerto Rico is being discussed right now by the U.S. government. When asked where he stood on the status of the Caribbean island, he said, "I want a nation, I am for independence. I don't believe we should give our land to anyone."

As a result of the protest, the news program changed its format and omitted the crowd shot altogether, which normally starts off the show. A similar protest is called for 5:00 p.m. on May 14 at the same building.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, the flag burning became a rallying point during a march to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the U.S. naval attack on the Puerto Rican capital. Public outrage has even brought statements of condemnation from U.S. and Puerto Rican government officials.

Sinn Fein leaders meet supporters of Irish struggle in United States

BY STEVE WARSHALL

CLEVELAND — "Sinn Fein has committed itself to end partition; end British rule in Ireland; and fight for Irish unity. That's what our Ard Fheis was all about. Our struggle will not be over until we achieve those goals," Pat Treanor, a Sinn Fein councilor, told 80 people here May 11. Sinn Fein, the party leading the fight to rid Northern Ireland of British imperialism, sent representatives Treanor, Joe Cahill, and Martin Ferris on a week-long tour of the United States. They will brief supporters of the Irish freedom struggle on the recent Ard Fheis (national conference), as well as urge support for a Yes vote on the recent agreement

on Northern Ireland.

"Peace doesn't mean the same thing to everybody," Treanor noted. "To some, it has meant getting rid of Republican resistance. To us, it means dealing with the root cause of the conflict. It means Irish independence, equality and justice.... We call for a yes vote because we see it as a forward step along the road to our objectives."

At the same time, Treanor urged that supporters of a united Ireland to remain vigilant. "We expect further attacks against us. Soon marching season will be upon us and it remains to be seen how the Unionists and RUC will comport themselves." The annual marches by defenders of British rule through nationalist neighborhoods in Northern Ireland have been a flashpoint in the struggle. "Sinn Fein will make maximum use of what the document gives us to work with to continue to fight for the immediate release of prisoners and the withdrawal of British troops," Treanor added.

At the meeting Moises Centron, of the Cleveland chapter of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners, expressed his support for the struggle against British rule in Ireland and drew parallels to the U.S. occupation of Puerto Rico. To friendly applause of the audience, Centron invited all present to march on Washington July 25 to call for Puerto Rican self-determination and the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners.

The same night some 200 people turned out for a meeting in Yonkers, New York, with Sinn Fein executive committee member Martin Ferris. "At this point in history, we're at the strongest point since 1921," he stated. "There is realization across the island for united nationalist sentiment."

British prime minister Anthony Blair "says he'll never disband the

Young Socialists Fund Drive April 17 - May 31

CITY	GOAL	PAID	%
Birmingham	200	114	57%
Seattle *	400	133	33%
New York	800	159	20%
Chicago *	1,000	185	19%
Boston	150		0%
Des Moines	200		0%
Houston	300		0%
Los Angeles	350		0%
Miami	200		0%
Newark	350		0%
Philadelphia	200		0%
Pittsburgh	550		0%
San Francisco/Santa Cruz	150		0%
Twin Cities, MN	250		0%
Washington, D.C.	250		0%
Total	5,350	591	11%
Goal/Should be	5,200	2,601	50%

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Indonesia: students protest austerity, gov't

Continued from front page

pansion of the demonstrations. The student movement has won widespread support from workers and peasants and has begun to establish links with them.

Meanwhile, Washington and other imperialist governments, increasingly nervous about the Indonesian powder keg, are seeking to stabilize the capitalist regime there while insisting on the very measures of economic austerity that are fueling the fires of unrest.

The May 12 killings, which occurred on a heavily trafficked road near downtown Jakarta, stunned many Indonesians. According to witnesses, police fired continuously for several minutes on unarmed students, first with rubber bullets and then with live ammunition, as well as beating and kicking protesters.

"The police went crazy. They beat us up. They chased everybody while others were firing," said Iwan Karimun, an economics student. The assault came after students, who until then had generally kept their protests on campus as demanded by the regime, marched into the streets of the capital.

Student leaders in Jakarta and other cities have vowed large-scale protests in response to the killings. Tens of thousands of students have been protesting since February against the Indonesian government and IMF-imposed austerity measures, which includes increased prices of food and basic necessities and layoffs. Daily demonstrations escalated after May 1 price hikes.

The students have begun to gain support from labor unions, farmers, women's groups, and others. At demonstrations in Medan, students were joined by young unemployed workers, while doctors and nurses joined protests in the capital city of Jakarta. On May 1, representatives of 30 workers' groups in Greater Jakarta held a four-hour meeting with students at the University of Indonesia campus in Depok. Student-worker links are also being forged in the cities of Bandung and Surabaya.

Students are organizing forums, drawing representatives from around the country, at many campuses. A national student conference was held in Bogor in April demanding the resignation of Suharto, lower prices on basic necessities, and a series of political changes. Even before the May 12 massacre, students had called for mass rallies on May 20, Indonesia's "Day of National Resurgence," which commemorates the fight against Dutch colonial rule.

Austerity measures from IMF bailout

Indonesia has been shaken by its worst economic and political crisis in three decades since the wave of currency devaluations throughout much of Asia triggered by the collapse of the Thai baht last July. The Indonesian rupiah has plunged an estimated 80 percent since then.

In an effort to stem the financial turmoil engulfing Asia, Washington has engineered loans totaling more than \$100 billion as "rescue packages" for south Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia. The loan arrangements — all

with belt-tightening conditions attached — are aimed at maintaining the flow of money into the coffers of U.S. banks and other imperialist financial institutions.

The IMF "rescue" plan for Indonesia is \$43 billion. This program is coupled with demands for "economic reforms" such as ending state monopolies to open up the country's markets in sugar, wheat, and soybeans to foreign investors.

In 1997 Indonesia was Asia's largest producer of natural gas, the second-largest producer of palm oil, and among the top five producers of coffee. It is also a major exporter of gold, tin, copper, cocoa, and vanilla, with the world's largest single copper and gold mine operating on the island of Irian-Jaya.

The so-called bailout is one of the largest of such efforts since Washington spearheaded the \$50 billion loan to Mexico in 1994, after the peso plunged 40 percent and imperialists feared the Mexican government could default on interest payments on the country's huge foreign debt. After cobbling together a "rescue package," the U.S. rulers forced the Mexican government to sell off much of the national patrimony and implement austerity measures on workers and farmers there.

The cuts in government subsidies, decreed in response to IMF demands, led to a 70 percent hike in oil prices; a 60 percent increase in electricity rates by the end of the year, and sharp rises in transportation costs. The IMF has also called for cuts in social programs, closing down insolvent banks, allowing international investors to take over commercial banks and other financial institutions, and closing down debt-ridden companies, the result of which is throwing thousands of workers into the streets.

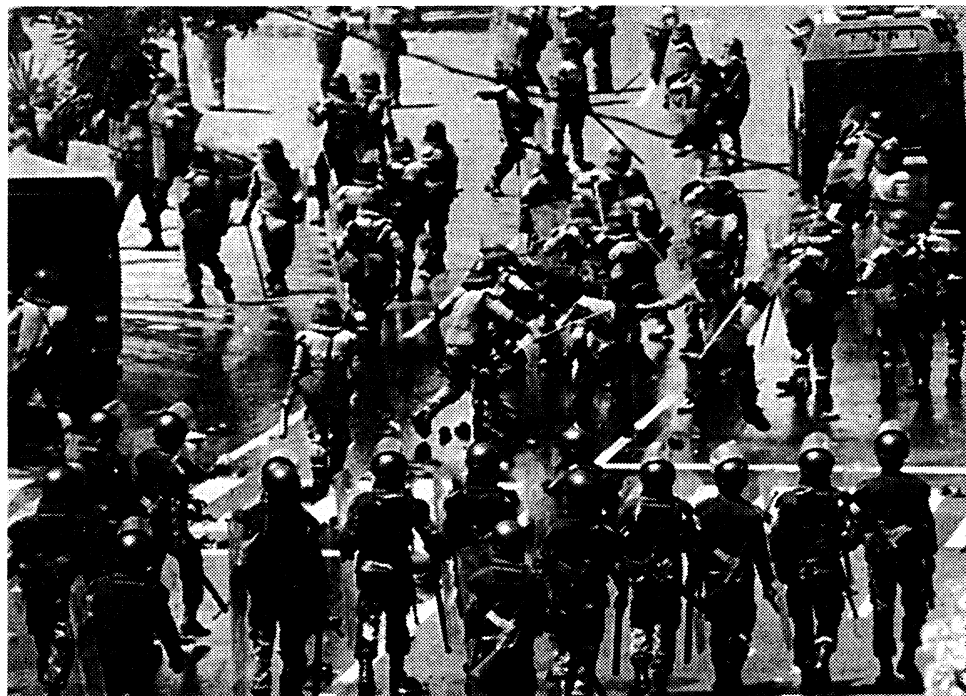
The cheapened currency is crippling most Indonesian companies, while capitalists attempt to compensate for their sagging profits by doubling and tripling prices of domestic goods.

Jakarta raised interest rates in early May, in order to prop up the plunging rupiah. This has weakened the already feeble banking system, as industrial bosses find it more difficult to borrow capital to pay their foreign debt, now estimated at \$80 billion. This in turn has hampered domestic investment in production, feeding unemployment.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "most of Indonesia's 220 banks are out of cash, and only a dozen or so are expected to survive as an estimated 50% to 70% of the nation's loans turn bad this year. Financing for trade has all but dried up."

Meanwhile, Indonesia's debt to international banks has ballooned — from \$21 billion in 1980 to \$108 billion in 1995.

On May 8 Washington allocated another \$1 billion to Indonesia in guaranteed loans.



Riot cops club a protester after a May 8 demonstration in Solo, Indonesia.

The economic crisis has ravaged working people in Indonesia. The International Labor Organization recently predicted that unemployment will rise as high as 10 percent this year from 5 percent in 1996. Job cuts, which put 420,000 workers onto the streets last year, are expected to skyrocket this year. The prices of basic foods such as sugar, wheat flour, and soybeans could jump 250-500 percent if the government eliminates subsidies for these staples. Poultry, meat, and egg production have slowed dramatically from a lack of imported feed.

The Group of Seven industrialized nations — Washington, London, Tokyo, Paris, Rome, Ottawa, Bonn, plus Moscow — met in Birmingham, England, on the weekend of May 11. There, the government representatives fretted about how to protect imperialist investments in Indonesia. U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin announced U.S. big-business's plan as "the best path is to implement the IMF program." Earlier Rubin commented, "The best protection against a political breakdown is the restoration of financial stability."

Circles in Washington and other imperialist governments, as well as some in the Indonesian bourgeoisie, have begun to debate whether the Suharto regime still remains more of an asset than a liability for capitalist interests. "What the government is experiencing now is not just a loss of credibility, but a loss of legitimacy," said Umar Juoro, an economist at the Center for Information and Development Studies in Jakarta.

There are, however, problems with getting rid of Suharto, a longtime pillar of imperialist interests in the region. Suharto, his relatives, and close friends are among the wealthiest of Indonesian capitalists, with an estimated fortune of \$30 billion. Suharto's son, Bambang Trihadmodjo, holds 25 percent of the bank of Andromeda and, with others, owns 75 percent of a petrochemical plant. Ousting President Suharto, then, would have bigger implications than simply

replacing a president.

Besides the May 12 assault, the Suharto regime has used its repressive forces against a number of other mass protests around the country. In early May, troops were sent in to quell rebellions in the city of Medan. Police fired live ammunition, tear gas, and plastic bullets at the protesters. In February and March alone, 12 student leaders of the student movement have been kidnapped or "disappeared."

During the rebellion in Medan, several stores were destroyed, many of which are owned by ethnic Chinese merchants. The big-business media has portrayed the rebellion in Medan as anti-Chinese. Although Chinese make up only about 3 percent of Indonesia's population, local Chinese businessmen control a much larger proportion of the country's commodities trade.

There is undoubtedly an element of scapegoating of Chinese merchants for the economic crisis. However, according to Efendi Panjaitan, who works with a local "nongovernmental" organization in Medan, the targeting of Chinese-owned businesses "is not against the people, but their things."

Recently, Washington has probed using its military might for maintaining stability. Since May 1, U.S. troops had been conducting joint military maneuvers as part of a five-year plan. With the explosion of antigovernment protests, the White House announced May 9 that joint military exercises with Indonesia would be stayed for the moment. The canceled exercise would have been the fourth this year and six more are scheduled.

Since 1993, the U.S. armed forces has held 41 training exercises with the Indonesian military, many of them involving the notorious Kopassus commando force, which has tortured and killed civilians. The Kopassus troops, which include Red Berets trained by the Pentagon, have been deployed in recent months against the student protesters in Jakarta.

Washington imposes sanctions on India for conducting nuclear testing

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The seven-week-old government of India conducted three underground nuclear explosions May 11, including a hydrogen bomb. Two days later, in defiance of Washington's announced sanctions, the rightist government exploded two more nuclear bombs underground. The blasts came a month after the government of Pakistan tested a ballistic missile capable of striking India's major cities. "Indian scientists will put a nuclear warhead on missiles as soon as the situation requires," said Murli Manohar Joshi, minister of science and technology.

According to the *New York Times*, U.S. government officials said May 13 that the Pakistani government is preparing to conduct an underground nuclear test as early as May 17. "Indian actions, which pose an immediate and grave threat to Pakistan's security, will not go unanswered," said Pakistani foreign minister Gohar Ayub Khan.

"Our position has always been if India tests, we will follow suit," declared Rifaat Hussain, a Pakistani scientist and former diplomat. "You have a missile race going on, and now you have a nuclear race going

on." The governments of Pakistan and India have fought wars against each other three times since 1947 in the dispute over the region of Kashmir. Both possess fighter bombers capable of delivering atomic bombs.

The day after the nuclear blasts U.S. president William Clinton announced that Washington would impose sanctions against India, including barring U.S. banks from making loans to the Indian government and opposing all loans from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. These measures are supposedly stipulated in the Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act, a U.S. law signed by the U.S. president in 1994. Clinton called on New Delhi to sign "now and without conditions" the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty endorsed by 149 governments in 1996, which supposedly bars the creation and testing of all nuclear weapons. The Pakistani regime and New Delhi have rejected the treaty.

Clinton signed the 1996 treaty, but a document released last year revealed that the Pentagon has been remaking thermonuclear weapons, including missile-, air-, and submarine-delivered warheads. Washington claims these are simply upgrades of exist-

ing devices, and therefore not covered under the test ban.

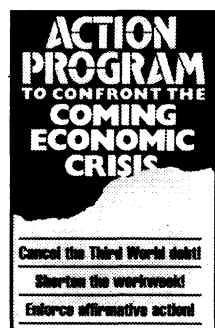
The Indian government stated it would consider adopting the treaty, if it was revised to set a deadline for all nations to eliminate nuclear weapons and outlaw computer-simulated tests. These conditions have been rejected by Washington, the biggest nuclear power and only government to ever use atomic weapons against human beings.

Beijing, which fought a border war with India in 1962, released a statement May 12 saying it was "seriously concerned about the nuclear test conducted by India."

The Russian government opposed actions taken by the Clinton administration against New Delhi. "I don't think we shall support any sanctions against India," Russian foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov asserted on national television May 12.

"India is a very good friend of ours," said Russian president Boris Yeltsin. "During my visit to India this year, I shall make every effort to overcome the problem." U.S. federal cop agencies claim Moscow has assisted the Indian military with developing a sea-launched missile for at least three years, which the Russian government denies.

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After 100 years, 'U.S. empire has not defeated Puerto Rican people'

BY JANET POST

MIAMI — For the first time in years, a prominent leader of the fight for Puerto Rican independence spoke at a public meeting in this city. Rafael Cancel Miranda was the featured speaker May 2 at a meeting that joined the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico and the defense of the Cuban revolution.

More than 175 people attended the meeting, held at the First Unitarian Church. The public forum, called "100 Years of Resistance," celebrated a century of struggle since 1898, when Washington's armed forces invaded and took control of Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines, and Guam. Puerto Rico remains a direct U.S. colony — the largest remaining colony in the world.

The program was sponsored by the Miami Coalition to End the U.S. Embargo of Cuba; the Antonio Maceo Brigade, an organization of Cuban-Americans who support the Cuban revolution; and the Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community (ATC). The Orlando, Florida, chapter of the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners played an important role in building the event, bringing a vanload of people from Orlando.

Members of the Cuba Vive group from Tampa, Florida, came to the event as well. A number of other people attended who had come from Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington, D.C., to participate the next day in a southern Regional Socialist Educational Conference.

Besides Cancel Miranda, other speakers included Irvin Forestier of the Orlando committee for Puerto Rican political prisoners, and Tony Jeanthenor of the Haitian rights organization Veye-Yo. Also speaking were Walfrido Moreno, president of the ATC, and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of the book *The Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*.

Unlike many previous political events of this kind, the May 2 meeting had been publicized throughout Miami two weeks prior. Despite the shrill publicity for a counterprotest broadcast that same day on Spanish-language station Radio Mambi, however, a picket line organized by two right-wing outfits, the Cuban American National Foundation and the paramilitary group Alpha 66, drew only 30 individuals. The rightists, behind police barricades across the street from the church, spent their time hurling insults at those attending the meeting, unable to disrupt the event.

Draped over the podium side by side were the Puerto Rican and Cuban flags, symbolic of the century-long history of common struggle by the two Caribbean peoples. Also displayed in the hall by Puerto Rican independence forces was the "Grito de Lares" flag that came out of Puerto Rico's 1868

uprising against Spanish colonial rule launched in the town of Lares.

The meeting was chaired by Andrés Gómez, national coordinator of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. Noting the range of forces represented on the speakers platform, Gómez compared this gathering to "meetings composed of similar people who 100 years ago struggled together in Key West, Tampa, Jacksonville, New York, and Philadelphia — Haitians, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans — to achieve the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico from Spanish colonialists. We are proud heirs of that struggle."

Gómez noted that the meeting was one of several that will take place in Miami this year during the commemoration of 100 years of anti-imperialist struggle, adding, "Tonight we have chosen to emphasize the struggle of our Puerto Rican brothers and sisters."

Haitian and Puerto Rican speakers

He then introduced Tony Jeanthenor, a leader of Veye Yo, who expressed his group's identification with the Puerto Rican struggle against foreign domination. "Resistance is not foreign to us," said Jeanthenor, who described the struggle against U.S. military intervention in Haiti and against the repression of Haitians living in the United States today. "We have been fighting for 185 years to become truly independent."

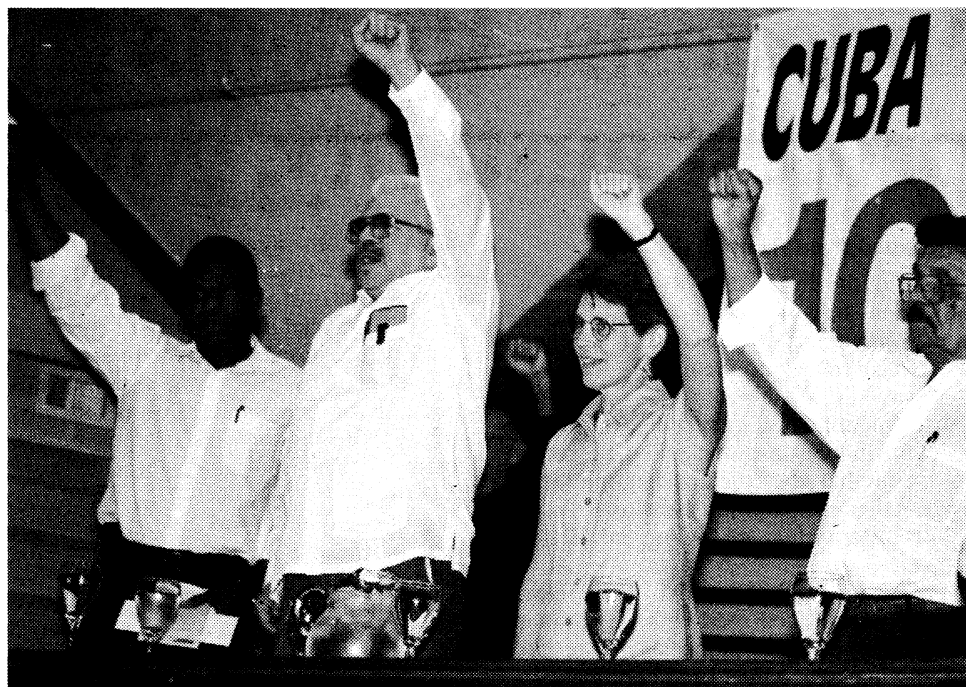
Irvin Forestier, of the Orlando chapter of the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners, invited people to join a demonstration July 25 in Washington, D.C., to demand freedom for 15 independence fighters locked up in U.S. jails and for self-determination for Puerto Rico. Demonstrations are also being organized at the United Nations and in Guánica, Puerto Rico. July 25 marks the 100th anniversary of the invasion of the island by U.S. armed forces at Guánica.

Forestier highlighted the case of Oscar López Rivera, one of the Puerto Rican political prisoners, who has been kept in solitary confinement for 13 years.

Also giving greetings to the meeting was Walfrido Moreno, president of the ATC, an organization of Cuban-Americans who oppose the U.S. embargo of Cuba, and which had several supporters at the event.

In her remarks, Mary-Alice Waters explained, "A meeting to discuss the lessons of 100 years of imperialist domination has to start with the world of today, as well as the world of tomorrow. For our purpose is not an historical discussion. The lessons of 100 years of struggle are in preparation for the battles to come."

Waters pointed to the deepening financial crisis of capitalism and resulting social devastation today. She said this is "a road that threatens tumultuous upheavals in Europe" — an arena where imperialist rivals



Militant/Barbara Graham

Speakers at May 2 meeting in Miami on 100 years of anti-imperialist resistance (left to right): Tony Jeanthenor, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Mary-Alice Waters, and Walfrido Moreno. Cancel Miranda led singing of Puerto Rico's national anthem.

are struggling for economic and military dominance. "These rivalries are playing themselves out already on the killing fields of Bosnia, Kosova, and Albania," she stated.

U.S. imperialism weaker today

Waters emphasized one important change in the past decades: "U.S. imperialism is weaker today, not stronger. Because its roots are sunk deeper in every powderkeg everywhere in the world. And the enemies of imperialism are stronger, more capable, and more experienced than they were 50 or 100 years ago."

She pointed to the widening working-class resistance and political struggles today, including the meatpackers strike against Smithfield/Lykes in Plant City, near Tampa, as well as the vitality of the current struggle for Puerto Rican independence.

Waters explained that this year is being marked in Cuba as the "40th anniversary of the decisive battles of the war of liberation." She said, "There could be no more appropriate name for this year. Because it was 40 years ago that the decisive battles of the revolutionary war were fought by the Rebel Army in Cuba under the command of Fidel Castro, establishing a revolutionary government that represented different class interests for the first time in the history of Latin America. A government that represented the workers and farmers in Cuba — not the imperialist families of the United States and their puppet regimes, or the allies of the puppets."

Waters closed with a question to the audience: "Has the past 100 years of resistance and struggle been worth it?" Pointing out that Cancel Miranda spent as many years incarcerated as Nelson Mandela did under the South African apartheid regime, she added, "The masters of the empire try to convince us that fighters with such tenacity and passion are crazy." Likewise, referring to the imprisonment of Oscar López Rivera, she said, "They can't understand the capacity of someone to withstand this many years of solitary confinement."

The keynote speaker was Rafael Cancel Miranda, who spent 28 years in U.S. prisons — two years for refusing to be drafted into the U.S. army prior to the Korean War, and the remaining time for participating in a 1954 armed attack on U.S. Congress by a group of young Puerto Rican nationalists.

Cancel Miranda began by saying that as a 20-year old he had been in Miami once before — at the airport after being released from the federal prison in Tallahassee, Florida, where he had served his sentence for refusing the draft. "I feel as free today as that younger man coming out of that prison," he said.

Referring to the quarter century he spent behind bars, the Puerto Rican leader remarked, "I was in prison, but I was always free." The important thing is not simply getting out of prison. "It's how you survive. It's how you come out of prison," he underlined.

Speaking about U.S. imperialism in Puerto Rico, Cancel Miranda said, "They've got all kinds of weapons, nuclear warheads, and so on, and they control the mass media. But they haven't been able to defeat my people."

Cancel Miranda explained that for the Yankee empire, Puerto Rico has long been a valuable source of profits as well as can-

non fodder. "We have become the first market of the United States. We have to buy from them, and we have to die for them. What were Puerto Ricans doing in Vietnam? What are Puerto Ricans doing in Bosnia today?"

This year the U.S. Congress is discussing the possibility of orchestrating a plebiscite in Puerto Rico as a way to continue U.S. domination of the island. Puerto Ricans would vote on statehood, independence, or the current "commonwealth" status established in 1952 as camouflage for U.S. colonialism. Cancel Miranda pointed out that, given the massive U.S. military presence on the island, Puerto Ricans would be voting "with a cannon to their heads."

The imperialists "control everything in Puerto Rico. How can there be a free plebiscite under those conditions?" he asked.

Cancel Miranda: 'Cuba is free'

Turning to Cuba, the Puerto Rican leader declared to loud applause, "It's been a long time since I've wanted to say this in Miami: I support the Cuban socialist revolution and I have a profound admiration for Fidel Castro."

He added, "To be here today [in Miami] standing up for Cuba is as important as being in Cuba." Dismissing the rightist counterdemonstrators still yelling outside, Cancel Miranda told his audience, "Those out there — they are dead. What's important is those who are alive, people like yourselves."

He asked, "When we fight for the Cuban revolution, what are we fighting for? In Cuba they are doing us a favor, they are helping us. We are free, in a way, because Cuba is free."

The independence fighter reminded the audience of Fidel Castro's pledge: "As long as there is one Puerto Rican fighting for independence, Cuba will support independence for Puerto Rico."

"The only sanity that exists in all of the Americas is in Cuba. In a 'normal' society you have to pay a price to be sane, to be free, to be yourself," Cancel Miranda added.

Cancel Miranda explained that in addition to being an advocate of Puerto Rican independence, "I am a socialist." He added that he had begun describing himself in public as a socialist only since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, because now it was possible to do so without being identified with the regime that had existed there before 1991. And, he added, because now it is no longer fashionable to call oneself a socialist.

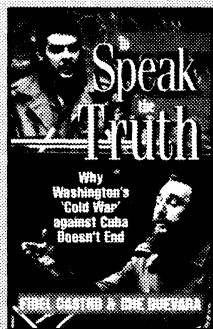
In the discussion Cancel Miranda was asked about the role of young people on the island. He replied, "I am convinced that the struggle for independence of Puerto Rico will be won because of the number of youth in Puerto Rico today who are being won to the struggle for independence."

The meeting was covered by Spanish-language TV Channel 23 and *El Nuevo Herald*, the Spanish-language edition of the *Miami Herald*. The TV reporter asked Cancel Miranda if he wanted Puerto Rico to be like Cuba.

"I would be more than proud," he responded.

Janet Post is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368 in Miami.

from Pathfinder

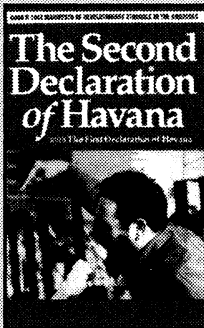


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Miami pickets say, 'Free Camacho now!'

BY RACHELE FRUIT

MIAMI — As protesters arrived for a May 7 picket at the downtown Federal Building here demanding freedom for Antonio Camacho, they unfurled a large banner in Spanish and English saying, "Free Camacho and all Puerto Rican Political Prisoners — Independence for Puerto Rico."

Antonio Camacho is a Puerto Rican independence activist who was in U.S. jails for more than 10 years because of his political ideas and activities. In February he was released on parole, then rearrested in Puerto Rico in April. He was then spirited off the island and jailed in this U.S. city.

Of the 35 people demonstrating in support of Camacho, about a dozen held the banner and several picket signs at the edge of the street where they faced the passing traffic. Most of the others marched with signs in a lively picket next to the Federal Building while another half dozen stood on the inside edge of the picket to provide security from rightists who had threatened to disrupt the protest.

Everyone who passed by peered over at the pickets as they waved their signs and shouted "Now!" each time Joaquín Pedroso from the Antonio Maceo Brigade led chants of "Free Antonio Camacho" and "Independence for Puerto Rico" in English and Spanish. They also chanted "U.S. hands off Puerto Rico" and "Free all Puerto Rican Prisoners of War." Some of the passersby honked their horns, took leaflets and waved. One yelled at the protesters in disapproval.

Among the groups participating in the picket line were the Orlando chapter of the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners, Antonio Maceo Brigade, Miami Coalition to End the US Embargo of Cuba, Alliance of Workers of the Cuban Community, and Socialist Workers Party.

Several members of the Orlando group traveled four hours to Miami to take part in the picket line.

Also present were several individuals who had heard about the picket at a May 2 meeting where longtime Puerto Rican independence fighter Rafael Cancel Miranda had spoken (see article on facing page).

In the three days leading up to the action Cuban-American rightists called for a counterprotest at the same site on talk shows on Spanish-language Radio Mambí. The day of the protest, the rightists canceled their action. Despite this, five right-wingers, one wearing a cap with an insignia of the terrorist group Alpha 66, walked up to the protest that called for Camacho's release.

After trying to provoke the pickets and being blocked by the activists acting as monitors, they were escorted away by the police. As they left the right-wingers screamed "traitors" at the pickets but were quickly drowned out by the escalating chants of "Free Camacho" and "Independence for Puerto Rico."

At the end of the picketing Angelo Negrón from the National Committee to Free the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners addressed the crowd. "Our purpose for being here," he said, "is to tell the world that Antonio Camacho is not a forgotten prisoner. His being released in February and then rearrested in April means that he was never really released. The struggle to liberate Antonio Camacho and the rest of the Puerto Rican political prisoners will continue."

Negrón invited everyone at the picket line to join the Orlando chapter of the committee in a national demonstration in Washington, D.C., on July 25, that will call for the release of all 15 Puerto Rican *independentista* prisoners and oppose U.S. colonial rule of the Caribbean nation.



Militant/Angel Lariscy

May 7 picket demands release of Camacho and other Puerto Rican political prisoners

Negrón then read a statement from Camacho's sister Marilyn, who declared: "Antonio Camacho's incarceration and extradition clearly illustrates the colonial status of Puerto Rico. It is a new assault on the *independentista* movement and on the political organizations fighting for self-determination of the *boricua* [Puerto Rican] nation.... We will continue working with the media to spread our message - supporting Antonio Camacho and all the Puerto Rican freedom fighters.... Let's stop American domination now!"

Ernie Mailhot from the Socialist Workers Party pointed to the cancellation of the counterprotest as evidence of the political strength of those fighting for sovereignty of

Puerto Rico and the weakening of the local rightist forces. Referring to the boycott of the demonstration by the local media, Mailhot stated: "That the U.S. rulers have told their press to hide the fact that Antonio Camacho is in jail here in Miami shows they are afraid of the support that can be generated for him and the other political prisoners."

Other speakers included Joaquín Pedroso from the Antonio Maceo Brigade, who pledged his group's ongoing support in the effort to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners.

Rachele Fruit is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1126.

Boston event celebrates 100 years fighting imperialism

BY ELENA TATE AND GREG MCCARTAN

BOSTON — A broadly sponsored meeting here April 29, "From the Spanish-American War to the Present: 100 Years of Resistance to U.S. Imperialism," was attended by 125 people at Roxbury Community College (RCC).

Tom Reeves, a professor with the Caribbean Focus Program of RCC, welcomed participants by noting that the Caribbean teaches the lessons of imperialism and slavery, but also teaches the lesson of the slave revolt, of resistance to imperialism, and of victories of masses of people fighting oppression and exploitation. Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir, a professor at Tufts University and the chairperson of the meeting, explained that the Spanish-American War marked Washington's emergence as a world imperialist power. Rather than signifying the liberation of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines from Spanish colonialism, it signaled another stage of their oppression, and the need for more resistance, she said.

Terry Marshall, a member of Students Organizing for Unity and Liberation at RCC and the co-chair, spoke of the experience of being an immigrant, and of the effects of colonialism on his country, Barbados.

Sponsors of the event included the July 26th Coalition, the Caribbean Focus Program of RCC, Students Organizing for Unity and Liberation (RCC), Education for Action (Radcliffe College), the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners, Latinos for Social Change, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Young Socialists.

The example of the Cuban revolution in the fight for national sovereignty and independence was cited by many speakers. Another major point of discussion was the political situation in Puerto Rico today.

Dagoberto Rodríguez, First Secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., began the evening by explaining that the difficult relations between Cuba and the ruling rich of the United States did not begin in 1959, the year the Cuban people overthrew the U.S.-back regime, opening the first socialist revolution in the Americas. "For 200 years our small island has faced the aggression of their great neighbor," he said.

Rodríguez described interventions such as the Southern states' attempt to annex Cuba before the U.S. Civil War; the U.S. intervention in Cuba's second War of Independence in 1898; the imposition of the Platt Amendment on the Cuban constitution, which authorized U.S. intrusion into Cuban affairs; and Washington's backing of dictator Fulgencio Batista. "All this, and the poverty and social conditions imposed on us, explains why the Cuban people had to make a revolution," Rodríguez said.

With the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1991, and the tightening of the U.S. embargo of the island, "some thought that Cuba would fall as well," he said. "But we won our own right to freedom and sovereignty, a right won only through revolution. Cuba will never sacrifice the sovereignty, independence, and socialist system that we have gained and defended at a very dear price."

Luis Cabral, a member of the Revolutionary Dominican Party, explained the history of U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic, pointing to invasions organized by Washington in 1916 and 1965. Before leaving, the U.S. invaders formed an army in the Dominican Republic, "not to defend the nation's sovereignty, but to defend the interests of the United States."

The U.S. government and corporations made the "economy of the Dominican Republic totally dependent on the United States, and remains so to this day," Cabral said. He ended by saying that he was inspired to see people in the United States — "in the monster's entrails" — who stand up to the power that wants to keep subjugated the peoples of the Third World.

"They invaded you in 1916?" said panelist Frances LaRoche, a Haitian rights activist who participated in the New England observer delegation to the last elections in her home country. "They got us in 1915. They stayed eight years [in the Dominican Republic]? They stayed 24 years in Haiti. They had to come back again — and they're still having a bad time!" she exclaimed.

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, noted that unlike the period following World War II, U.S. imperialism today is relatively weaker. The brutal face of imperialism has emerged much more clearly, she said, but "its roots are sunk in

every powder keg that is about to explode the world over."

One of the greatest blows to imperialism is the Cuban revolution, which brought a government of workers and peasants to power for the first time in the Western Hemisphere. Waters pointed out that this year Cuba is celebrating the 40th anniversary of the decisive battles of the revolution. "In 1958, the Cuban people mobilized in their millions. Only by breaking the economic power of imperialism could they chart a course toward independence. The first free territory of the Americas and the first socialist revolution had to be inseparable."

In today's world, Waters said, the "ranks of those who struggle will grow. In the United States, the stakes are higher than in anywhere else in the world."

Waters ended by quoting a message that Ernesto Che Guevara, Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution, wrote in 1966 to the Tricontinental conference of anti-imperialist fighters from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. "What is at stake is the destiny of humanity.... Our every action is a battle cry against imperialism and a call for the unity of the peoples against the great enemy of the human race: the United States of America."

Rafael Cancel Miranda, a Puerto Rican independence fighter who was imprisoned in U.S. jails for 28 years, said that the U.S. rulers "have a crisis — it is us. When we come together, they are small. We are the strong ones when we are united. We fight for the Cuban revolution because it is our revolution."

Cancel Miranda spoke of the subjugation of Puerto Rico by Washington and the island's colonial status for the last century. He pointed to the Puerto Rican political prisoners in U.S. jails as examples of fighters today. During the discussion period Cancel Miranda was asked about the plebiscite being discussed in the U.S. Congress to decide the fate of Puerto Rico. He said, "Let's be free first. Only the free have the power to deal equally. A slave doesn't have any power — only the power to obey or fight back."

Another participant in the meet-

ing asked about the idea that Puerto Rico could not survive as an independent country. Cancel Miranda answered, "Puerto Rico is 'Profit Island, USA.' We work for them. We multiply their capital. It is a forced market for them. Puerto Ricans live in poverty, in prisons, and in projects. And even worse, the U.S. government uses Puerto Rican youth as cannon fodder in their wars," he said, citing the invasion of Panama, the imperialist wars against the people of Korea and Iraq, and the NATO occupation of Bosnia. "They use the bases in Puerto Rico to invade other parts of the Caribbean and Latin America."

An RCC student asked if the Cuban revolution would continue after President Fidel Castro. Excilia Saldaña, a Cuban poet visiting the United States who was also on the panel, responded. "We love what the generation of Fidel has realized," she said, "and what all of us have been able to do together. It is not Fidel's strength alone, but the intelligence of a people confronting a reality."

The day after the meeting, Cancel Miranda spoke about the Puerto Rican struggle for independence to an American history class and to the Latino student club at a local high school.

Elena Tate is a member of the Young Socialists. Greg McCartan is a member of Local 1 of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees.

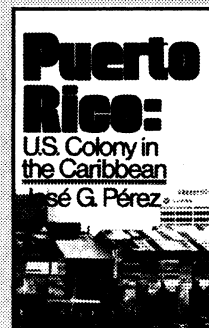
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Black farmers call for end to discrimination

BY WILLIE M. REID

DETROIT—Demanding government action against racist discrimination, about a dozen Black farmers and their supporters picketed here May 8 in front of Cobo Hall. Vice President Albert Gore was speaking there at a luncheon meeting of the Economic Club of Detroit. The next day, several hundred people attended a National Black Farmers Conference.

Gary Grant, president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association (BFAA), stated in a release to the press, "It is the second week of May and thousands of acres of farm fields lay barren and unplanted by Black farmers."

Grant called attention to the class-action lawsuit—*Pigford et al. v. Glickman*—filed last September by many BFAA members against the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The lawsuit alleges "rampant discrimination against Blacks in the USDA loan servicing and other county

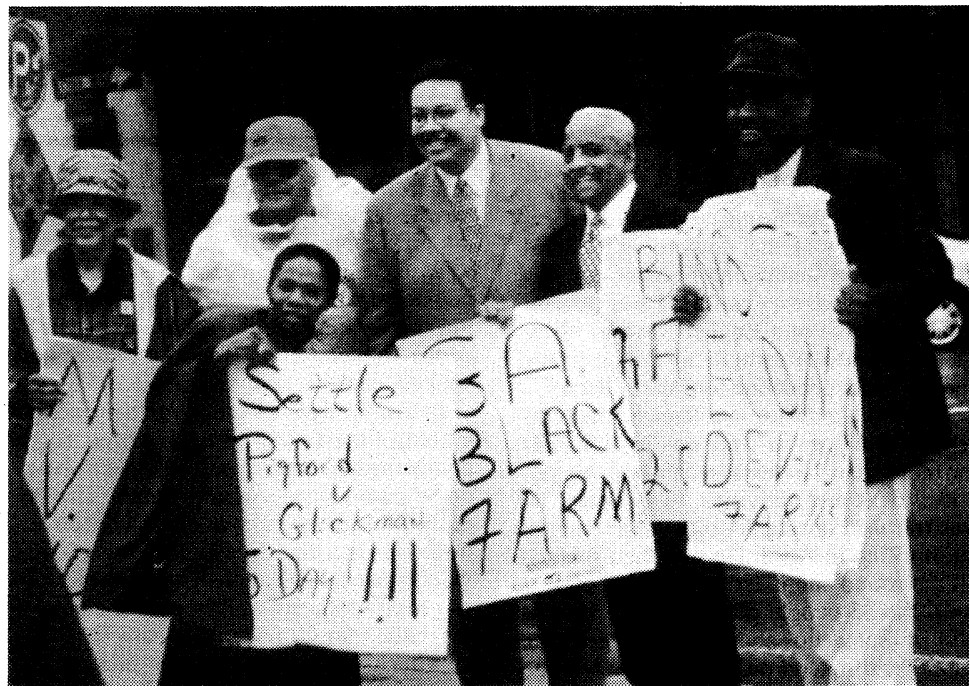
office administered programs," dating back to 1983. The farmers are seeking \$2.5 billion in damages.

The picket line and conference were partially in response to a recent U.S. Justice Department ruling that the two-year statute of limitations has expired for many of the plaintiffs.

"Simply put," Grant emphasized in the statement, "our farmers have lost their constitutional right to grow crops and feed our families."

More than 300 people attended the National Black Farmers Conference the next day, organized to help raise awareness of the critical conditions facing Black farmers. Most are small family farmers who also hold other jobs to make ends meet and have less than 50 acres of land. Many face the prospect of being pushed out of agriculture because of foreclosures.

The conference featured a panel of speakers from farm organizations and food coop-



Militant/Jay Ressler

A dozen Black farmers and supporters picketed outside an Economic Club of Detroit meeting addressed by Vice President Albert Gore May 8.

eratives in Michigan, Georgia, and North Carolina; teachers from university agricultural departments; elected officials and

USDA representatives. Secretary of Agriculture Daniel Glickman, a defendant in the lawsuit, was not present although he was listed as an invited speaker in the program.

BFAA president Grant, seated in the audience, challenged Ralph Page, one of the five USDA representatives on the platform, following his presentation. He asked Page to "explain why the USDA can grant \$30 million to the corporate court to distribute food substitutes through government programs but refuses to incorporate the fresh foods and vegetables grown by Black farmers." Former secretary of agriculture Michael Espy, who is Black, also spoke.

Joseph Lowery, of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Dick Gregory were keynote speakers. They pointed to the fight being waged by Black farmers, as a movement that will revive the broader struggle for Black rights.

U.S. representatives John Conyers, Jr., program chair, and Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick convened the Detroit conference. It is one in a series planned for Black farmers in major cities around the country.

Willie M. Reid is a member of United Auto Workers Local 235 in Detroit.

March will protest killing by Chicago cop

BY JOHN STUDER

CHICAGO — "They are going to hear my voice," Vanessa Laurence told a crowd of more than 100 people at the Hartzell Memorial United Methodist Church on Chicago's south side May 2. Two days earlier Joseph Winfield, Laurence's nephew, was hit with a police car while on foot and then shot to death by Chicago cops.

"Joe was on his way to get a car, he had just started a job, he was getting his life together. He said to me that he was going to get a car and come home and drive me to the grocery, and he got his life taken away from him," Laurence, accompanied by seven other members of her family, told the mostly Black audience. "I've been told by a number of eyewitnesses, people who came forward to talk to me, that Joseph was run down by a police car, shot in the leg, and then the police continued to shoot when he was down. He was shot six or seven times in the back. This is a case of murder."

There were numerous witnesses to the killing. Several told the *Chicago Tribune* the same story they told to Vanessa Laurence. The cops claimed they drove Winfield down with their car to take "evasive action," after detaining two other people who were with him. Harold Quitmon, one of the eyewitnesses, told the *Tribune* that Winfield "didn't try to get up at all" before he was shot.

"Thank you for your outpouring of support," Laurence told the protesters at the church rally, "we've got to stick together."

The rally had been organized to broaden support for march against cop brutality planned for May 19 on the anniversary of the birth of Malcolm X. The march was called after Chicago cops brutalized another Black youth, Jeremiah Mearday, a second time on March 19. Two cops had been fired just one week earlier for beating Mearday last fall, smashing his front teeth down his throat with a police flashlight.

The rally was called by the Greater Chicago Committee Against Police Brutality.

Organizers brought thousands leaflets to the rally for activists to take and build the downtown march. They also had printed a button with a picture of Malcolm X reading "May 19. March Against Police Brutality."

Rev. Joseph Napier, who chaired the rally and is serving as coordinator of the march, announced that a number of the churches building the demonstration were making buses available for any group that needed them to get people downtown on May 19.

Vanessa Laurence told the rally that she and her family would be at the march to keep the fight for justice for the death of Joseph Winfield going.

Committee leaders also announced plans for a series of continuing actions to build toward the May 19 rally. Three more church rallies are planned, one in a Puerto Rican neighborhood and two in the Black com-

munity, one on Chicago's south side and one on the west side. In addition, one of the groups endorsing the march, Justice is Blind/Mothers Against Injustice, organized a march on two Chicago police stations on Mothers Day to protest racism and brutality at the hands of the cops and the courts.

Others who spoke at the church rally were U.S. congressmen Robert Rush and Daniel Davis; Rev. Al Sharpton from New York; committee chair Rev. Paul Jakes Jr.; Bob Lucas, executive director of the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization; and several victims of police assault. Opponents of police brutality are urged to gather at 12 noon on May 19 in Chicago's Federal Plaza at Dearborn and Adams in the loop.

John Studer is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 1011.

Alabama tornado: harshest on working people

BY SUSAN LAMONT

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Working people here in central Alabama are still reeling from one of the worst tornadoes in state history, which left 34 dead, hundreds seriously injured, and thousands homeless.

On the night of April 8, a tornado ripped apart more than 1,000 homes across three counties here. The coal mining community of Oak Grove was completely flattened and damage to several other communities was severe. Among those killed were many retirees — two coal miners, two school teachers, a domestic worker, a steelworker, and a nurse — as well as a trucker, a hospital worker, a Walmart worker, a beautician, and a cast iron pipe worker.

Jefferson County officials initially reported 1,023 homes were completely destroyed; they then revised the estimate to say 443 were destroyed, 275 suffered major damage, and 459 had minor damage. Many of the affected homes were trailers.

Workers throughout the region responded with solidarity immediately after the devastating storm, including union members at U.S. Steel's Fairfield Works. Many of the areas hit were working-class communities and old mining camps located only a few miles from the basic steel mill in Fairfield, just west of Birmingham. A lot of steelworkers live in or near the areas affected.

"It looks like they've been bombed," said one U.S. Steel worker. A retired member of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 2122, Pat Sullivan, was killed in the storm. Another, William Browning, lost his wife Cheryl. Others sustained major damage to their homes and property.

USWA Local 2122's building was temporarily turned over to the Red Cross, which used the union hall as one of the sites to organize relief efforts. Along with USWA Local 1013, which also organizes some workers at Fairfield Works, two plant-gate collections have raised \$16,000. The union also requested the use of some of the company's heavy equipment to help clear trees and other debris left by the storm.

Inside the mill, workers poured money into collections for those union members hardest hit. Siegfried Powell, 33, who works in the slab yard at U.S. Steel, spent Saturday, April 11, after the storm delivering donations of food and water to Pratt City, a predominantly Black community located a few miles from the mill and one of the areas that sustained severe damage. He explained that while state troopers, police, and other officials were quickly dispatched to predominantly white neighborhoods immediately after the storm, people in Pratt City had to wait several days for such aid.

"The people in Pratt City are steelworkers, rail workers, people who work in cafeterias," Powell said. "The city can throw together millions to repair [sports stadium] Legion Field, and yet there are people a few miles away who are homeless. Why is it that we are the ones who make this city so rich, and yet we're the last to be helped?"

A statement to the media was also re-

leased by Ronald Truss, president of the Metro Birmingham Branch of the NAACP. "The slow and incomplete relief to the black community is unacceptable for now and in the future," Truss said. "The Black community" is not a "second class."

In an effort to defuse these protests President William Clinton visited tornado areas here April 15 for three hours, making sure the TV cameras were rolling when he stopped at several of the affected Black communities. He promised that federal money would immediately be available to help victims. It was announced that the Small Business Administration had already approved \$600,000 in loans to homeowners and renters at 4 percent interest.

But callers to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which is the government clearing house for disaster aid, learned that getting assistance may not be all that easy. Applicants for loans must submit to a credit check and a determination of their income level. The agency tells callers point blank that loans will not be approved if FEMA decides an applicant's income is insufficient to repay the loan later.

Workers turned down can apply for an outright cash grant, but they receive significantly less money than if granted a loan. Other workers report difficulty in getting insurance claims settled for the full amount of damage costs.

Kristin Meriam, newly announced candidate for Alabama governor on the Socialist Workers Party ticket, called for an immediate, federally funded campaign to help rebuild and repair all the homes affected by the April 8 tornado. "This would help provide jobs for the many unemployed and underemployed workers in the state," Meriam, a USWA member, noted. "Sufficient relief funds should be granted to all victims, not just those the federal government deems 'credit-worthy.' Free medical care must be available to all those injured."

Susan LaMont is a member of USWA Local 2122 at U.S. Steel's Fairfield Works.

Work-release prisoners join tornado solidarity effort

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — Workers behind bars joined the solidarity effort for tornado victims. Women prisoners at the Birmingham Community-Based Facility, a work-release center here, organized a collection among inmates that netted \$137, which was then donated to the Red Cross.

The women in this jail — who work every day in local factories, restaurants, and offices — are paid the same wages as other employees in their workplace. But the prisoners receive a mere \$45 out of each paycheck to cover their expenses, plus \$140 a month to purchase clothes, work supplies, and other necessities. The State of Alabama takes 32.5 percent of

their gross pay for "room and board," plus \$4 a day for transportation to and from work. Those prisoners sentenced to pay "restitution" for conviction on theft charges have another 25 percent taken out of their weekly pay. What little remains of their check is deposited in an account they receive upon release from prison. Meanwhile, the state collects interest.

Even the \$45 weekly stipend can be arbitrarily reduced to \$20 if prison officials decide the inmates have "failed inspection" of their dormitories. Failing inspection means the workers get no \$140 allotment that month for all other necessities. They also lose all weekend passes and family visitation rights.

Iowa tire strikers call solidarity rally

Continued from front page

sites around the factory. Strikers enjoy regular visits by union supporters from around town, and the honks and waves of workers in passing cars and trucks.

Titan owner Maurice Taylor, Jr. continues to outrage workers across Iowa with his statements in TV and radio interviews. On May 7, Taylor lied about the overtime forced on the unionists in his factory, claiming that the overtime is a result of the company being "trapped by work rules in the union contract." For over two years, most workers have been forced to work 26 days in a row, followed by just two days off.

In a new development, Titan ran a large ad for strikebreakers in the *Des Moines Register* May 10 stating, "Certain positions are permanent full-time openings. Other potential positions are temporary replacements of workers engaged in a labor dispute." An employment agency called Labor Ready is taking applications May 16-17, the same weekend as the union's solidarity rally.

In a May 13 news report, Taylor threatened to begin hiring replacements and to transfer work to other plants unless union members returned to work while contract talks continue.

The strikers have responded to this threat with calm determination, and the union has organized hand billing at Labor Ready in advance of the advertised hiring sessions. The flyer reads, "Don't be deceived by Titan Tire Corp. You can expect forced overtime with little or no time off. You can expect unfair and unequal pay.... Please allow us time to settle our problems and then come back and apply for permanent employment with dignity and a clear conscience."

A call has gone out to area unions to mobilize to protest the weekend recruitment of strikebreakers, in addition to joining the solidarity rally. Ron Gilbert, a 32-year veteran at Titan, said, "The only way we can stop it is to have a mass of people there camping out."

USWA Local 310 activists who work at



Militant/Tom Mailer
Supporters of the *Militant* sold 27 copies of the socialist paper at the Case plant in East Moline, Illinois, May 12.

the Bridgestone/Firestone tire plant across town are organizing plant gate hand billing there to build the solidarity rally, and plan on joining protesters at Labor Ready.

Wilbur Wilson, who heads up Local 310's organizing committee said: "It goes back to

the old labor saying: 'An injury to one is an injury to all.' We had a lot of people help us during our [1994-95] strike, and we need to be there to help others. We may not have a lot of money, but we have a lot of spirit."

"We'll keep fighting, every day," was the common sentiment of picketers interviewed May 10. Striker Sang Vansylalom, who has worked Titan curing presses for one year, added, "Saturday will be a lot of fun! Bring your neighbors, family, everybody!"

The solidarity rally will be held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 16 at the Local 164 union hall, 2727 East Market Street in Des Moines. The hall is located a couple blocks from the Titan plant. For more information, call: (515) 262-4935.

Ray Parsons is a member of USWA Local 310 in Des Moines.

Case workers told to vote again on contract

BY TOM MAILER

EAST MOLINE, Illinois — On May 14 members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 1304 at Case Corp. in East Moline will take a "re-ratification" vote on a contract that was rejected April 30. Some 3,300 workers at five Case plants throughout the Midwest have been working without a contract since March 29. Case is an international manufacturer of farm and construction equipment.

The 1,200 members of Local 1304 are the only ones being made to vote a second time. The results of this vote will be added to the votes of the four other locals from the original ratification election. This was the only local that voted the offer down, because of strong opposition to the deepening of the two-tier wage setup. The proposal increases the time required for new hires to reach pay equity with current employees from three years to five years. It also would eliminate health-care benefits for new hires when they retire.

Gil Gibson, a member of the bargaining committee, explained that there were only minor changes in local issues from the contract voted on previously.

Workers were outraged by this turn of events. "The UAW International is shoving this down our throats," said William Baker, a machine operator at Case. "They are making just our local vote, because we're the bad boys," that rejected the agreement.

Some workers were resigned to the situation. "What can we do? The other locals

didn't support us in this fight for equality," of new and current employees, said one Local 1304 member.

Others have a different view. Baker said he expects many workers to vote no again. Another union member proudly stated that "We stood up for our rights. At Deere they didn't put up a fight." UAW members at John Deere accepted a deeper two-tier contract re-

cently where new hires never reach the same wages of the current employees.

"But I'm a fighter," he declared. "Our forces will regroup and we'll have our chance. I don't give a damn what it takes."

Ray Parsons, a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 310 in Des Moines, contributed to this article.

Workmates in Britain defend fired socialist

BY PAUL GALLOWAY AND CELIA PUGH

MANCHESTER, England — Paul Davies, an electrical assembly worker at Electrium in Manchester, is winning support from his workmates in a fight to get his job back. Davies, a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU) and the Communist League, worked at Electrium, formerly Wylex, for 14 months. He was sacked April 3 without warning, in the final minutes of a working week.

The response from workmates was immediate. Three workers waited for him to leave the plant to discuss how to respond. On the first Monday after the sacking 23 workers stopped on the plant gate to discuss this further with Davies, including how to fight for reinstatement through the union.

The bosses claim that he was not sacked

but that his temporary contract had run its course. Davies' workmates dispute this. To back up the demand for the unionist's reinstatement, some have helped him produce and circulate a fact sheet inside the plant. This statement points out that the company had never raised problems with Davies' work, attendance, or time keeping. The fact sheet challenges the bosses' claim that he was "let go" because his job in the plating shop had been made redundant. It explains that Davies was not offered an alternative job in assembly, where he first began his employment and where the company is taking on new hires.

"Moreover," the fact sheet argues, "when Paul was finished he was not treated as though he was being made redundant. He was not allowed to work his notice and was escorted off the premises by a security guard.... Paul Davies was sacked because of his political and trade union activity." Davies is known among many of the 500 or so workers at the plant for his view that working people throughout the world need strong, effective unions. The fact sheet explains, "He engages in civil discussion with his workmates about a programme to strengthen the labour movement: against temporary contracts which pit worker against worker; for a shorter working week which can unite employed and unemployed."

These views gain a hearing in the plant, where the bosses are introducing different conditions for temporary workers as part of an attack on the conditions of all workers. One recent innovation is a "training device" for temporary assembly workers. Individual press-button timers are issued to new workers so that supervisors can monitor and "improve" production speed.

In the week prior to his sacking, Davies was involved in organizing a public meeting in solidarity with the Irish freedom struggle hosted by the Troops Out Movement in the center of Manchester. The meeting, which attracted local press attention, was addressed by Sinn Fein councilor Geraldine Cassidy. Sinn Fein is the party leading the fight to end British rule in Ireland. This was the first meeting of its type since the Irish Republican Army bombing of the Arndale shopping center in this city in 1996.

The fact sheet notes Davies' championing of solidarity with struggles of working people, from the Liverpool dockers to the defense of socialist Cuba. "Paul is well

known for his activity in campaigning to get the British troops out of Ireland. [He] has introduced a number of workmates to political papers, books, and pamphlets." The fact sheet concludes, "It's in the interests of all workers at Electrium that the company not be allowed to dismiss workers because of their political views."

In discussion with workmates, Davies explained, "Only through civil discussion involving everyone — no matter what their views — can we strengthen the unions and defend ourselves." He argues that his sacking is an attack on the rights of all workers in the factory and that all workers have an interest in defending free speech and opposing the sacking of anyone on the basis of their political, religious, or other beliefs.

Davies returned to the plant gate May 7 and ran out of the nearly 40 fact sheets he had, as workers stopped to discuss how to keep up the pressure for reinstatement. A few days later, some workmates reported on discussions inside the plant and that fact sheets were circulating around their sections. One worker raised the suggestion of a petition. Davies has written to the company requesting his reinstatement, and the AEEU union convenor inside the plant has agreed to represent him in any meeting with the company.

Paul Galloway is a member of the AEEU in Manchester. Celia Pugh is a member of the AEEU in London.

Black activist in Canada appeals 1994 frame-up

BY GABRIEL CHARBIN

TORONTO — Black rights activist Dudley Laws faced provincial judges on April 27-28 to appeal his 1994 conviction on charges of conspiracy to violate U.S. and Canadian immigration laws.

Laws was originally arrested on Oct. 15, 1991, after a massive police entrapment operation. He is a founder of the Black Action Defense Committee (BADC) and a well known leader in the fight against police brutality.

Leading up to the appeal, BADC organized two rallies on April 18 and April 25. Participants marched to a busy intersection in a West Indian community. The chants of the dozen marchers attracted people to the rally. Dozens more stood outside stores to listen to the speeches and greet Laws and his supporters. Many raised fists in solidarity with Laws.

On April 26, as part of his bail conditions, Laws had to surrender himself to the Toronto Don Jail. A rally was organized to escort him to the jail. The 40 participants chanted "Dudley Laws is a political prisoner!... Don't look in Cuba!... Right here in Canada!" and "Choochalooza Dudley Laws," a chant meaning "keep up the

struggle" sung by fighters in South Africa to free Nelson Mandela. Lawyer Charles Roach spoke, saying, "We are here to tell the police in this jail that Dudley will be watched and if they do anything to him we will come back every day until justice is served!"

The panel of three appeal judges was chaired by Ontario Chief Justice Roy McMurtry. During the appeal hearing, every seat in the courtroom was occupied by Laws's supporters, with some having to sit on the floor or stand. Throughout the two-day hearing, more than 80 people came to support Laws.

Laws's lawyers based his appeal on the fact that he was denied a public trial. Examples they used included: when some of his supporters were excluded from the courtroom for refusing to remove religious headgear; that Laws was not present at part of the trial; that permission for wiretapping was wrongfully authorized; and that the judge ruled against introducing the issue of police entrapment at the trial.

Laws is out on bail awaiting the decision of the appeal judges.

Joanne Pritchard contributed to this article.

From Pathfinder

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Available from bookstores listed on page 12.

Sinn Fein: struggle for united Ireland continues

Continued from front page

prisoners granted temporary parole to participate in the Ard Fheis, including the Republican Officers Commanding from Long Kesh, Maghaberry, and Portlaoise prisons. Their presence reflected the leadership role played by the prisoners in the fight for self-determination, as well as the momentum built up for their release. Martin Meehan, a leader of Saoirse, which campaigns for the prisoners, called on the conference delegates to "intensify the fight to get them home for good."

The Ard Fheis was meeting in its second session. The first, held April 18-19, had agreed to reconvene after further discussions in the cumann (branches) on the Northern Ireland Agreement. (A report on the first session appeared in the May 4 *Militant*.) All the delegates these reporters spoke with said that lengthy discussions had been held over the last three weeks. A high point of these was a series of public meetings addressed by leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa.

ANC leaders speak in Ireland

At the first session of the Ard Fheis, ANC deputy secretary general Thenjiwe Mtintso was a featured guest. Following that, a delegation of ANC leaders Mac Maharaj, Valli Moosa, Cyril Ramaphosa, and Mathews Phosa came to Ireland to meet for three days with the republican fighters. With just two days publicity, they addressed an 800-strong public meeting in Belfast. Three hundred people attended a meeting in Dublin, and similar meetings were held in many other towns and cities. Phosa and Ramaphosa also joined a Sinn Fein delegation in a meeting with 120 republican prisoners in Long Kesh.

At the center of these discussions, reported the Sinn Fein paper *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, was learning from the struggle against apartheid in South Africa the "importance of mass action. Changes will not be made unless the people are mobilised to push them through."

The significance of these meetings was also noted by *An Phoblacht* when it commented, "17 years ago this week [Irish prisoner] Bobby Sands was in the final days of his hunger strike. At the same time [UK prime minister] Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government was calling the ANC terrorists.... Today the ANC is the democratically elected government in South Africa. And Irish republicans are on the march to freedom."

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Brooklyn

Ours is the Epoch of Revolution. Linking labor battles, national liberation struggles, and fights for social justice to rebuild an international anti-imperialist youth movement. Speakers: Andy Terranova, Irish freedom struggle activist and recent participant in Sinn Fein Youth delegation to Basque country; Young Socialists representative; others. Fri., May 22, 7:30 p.m. Open house 6:30 p.m. *Pathfinder Bookstore*, 59 4th Avenue 9 (two blocks from the Atlantic/Pacific St. stop). Translation into Spanish. Sponsored by the Young Socialists. Donation \$4. For more information, call: (718) 399-7257.

The British media gave scant attention to the ANC leaders' tour.

Through six hours of debate at the Ard Fheis, more than 60 delegates presented their views and the conclusions of the discussion on the agreement in their local areas. Most who spoke supported the proposals of the Sinn Fein leadership.

Summarizing the Sinn Fein leadership's assessment of the agreement, the party's president, Gerry Adams, explained, "On the one hand it upholds the Unionist veto over the constitutional statutes of the north, and, on the other hand it reduces British territorial claim to that one hinge, while it compels Unionists to accept key and fundamental changes involving all-Ireland dimensions to everyday life." The Unionists are those who support the continued "union" of the six northeastern Irish counties with the United Kingdom.

Adams stated, "British rule has not ended. Neither has partition. That is why our struggle continues."

Amendments to Irish constitution

A few delegates, mostly from the Irish Republic, questioned whether they should agree to changes to Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution of the Republic. The proposed amendments would dilute Dublin's territorial claim to the six northern counties, by making reunification conditional on the consent of the majority there.

Larry O Toole from Dublin argued that "thousands of people in the 26 counties [of the Republic] are against changing Articles 2 and 3." He also asked, "Will Northern nationalists be even more exposed" with the removal of these articles.

Rita O Hare, who moved the motion for "Yes" votes for the leadership, stated that Sinn Fein is against any change of Articles 2 and 3 that would "remove the imperative to unity or affect the rights to citizenship. We oppose the incorporation of the consent clause." But she pointed to the additional proposed constitutional amendment to Article 29, which provides for the setting up of cross-border bodies and "ensures the actuality of right to jurisdiction in the north." She also noted that the change to Article 2 actually confirms for the first time the right to Irish citizenship for the people of Northern Ireland.

O Hare argued, "All aspects of the agreement have to be viewed in the wider context. Change is coming as a result of our struggle."

Many delegates expressed the view that the real content of both the cross-border institutions and the Northern Ireland Assembly would be decided in struggle.

Martin Ferris, a Sinn Fein leader from

Kerry, said that while he understood reservations about entering the assembly, "the partition setup of the past cannot be applied any longer. This assembly's lifeline is connected to the North-South bodies, the all-Ireland element without which it cannot function. And our intention is to expand that all-Ireland dimension. The assembly," Ferris added, "will be an opportunity to 'go face to face with those who want to hold on to power in the North and hold back the tide of change. The six-county statelet,' he added, 'depends for its existence on the exclusion of nationalists.'"

Reflecting on the increasing support for Sinn Fein throughout Ireland, Martina Anderson, speaking for prisoners in Maghaberry jail, said, "We firmly believe that we cannot allow the gains made by Sinn Fein to be squandered by parties such as the SDLP [Social Democratic and Labour Party]. Our participation in the assembly will enhance our struggle in a new phase." The SDLP is a reformist party that accepts the partition of Ireland.

Summarizing the challenge nationalists face, Sinn Fein Youth delegate Niall O Murcha argued, "The problem is not the policies of the state, but the state itself." O Murcha said that "self-imposed isolation is what our enemies want. We need to turn the Assembly into another battle ground to end partition."

After the referendum on the agreement, Sinn Fein is preparing for elections to the Northern Assembly in June. Members in the South were encouraged to travel North to join the effort by election director Dodie McGuinness.

After the vote to endorse this electoral move, Adams explained this "must be underpinned by a strategy wedded to mobilizations, campaigning, street activism, and the international dimension."

Protests against cops, rightists

A significant number of the speakers were youth delegates reporting on the almost weekly pickets, protests, and marches they have been organizing and are planning. On April 26 they organized a 3,000-strong protest in Crossmaglen calling for the release of the prisoners. Deirdre Fallon reported that Sinn Fein Youth members were currently facing 23 court cases from the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) as a result of harassment they have faced for calling these actions. Fallon declared, "Despite what [British prime minister] Tony Blair says, the RUC will be disbanded."

Using the pretext of alleged threats from "dissident" republican groups the same day as the Ard Fheis, the *Irish Times* reported the British Army mounted a huge security

operation in West Belfast.

Many delegates also spoke to these reporters about their efforts to organize against the forthcoming pro-British Orange Order parades, which seek to march into nationalist areas. The *Irish News* reported May 12 that the British government-appointed Parades Commission has just decided to route such a march through the predominantly Catholic village of Dunloy on May 17, just five days before the referendum. The commission is also expected to sanction a major pro-British parade through North Belfast on June 19, just before the elections to the assembly.

The last few weeks have also seen an accelerated fragmentation of the pro-British forces. While Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble secured the backing of his party's council to endorse the agreement, 9 of the 13 members of Parliament representing his party oppose it, as does the 80,000-strong Orange Order.

Ultrarightist Ian Paisley has organized a series of rallies along with dissident Ulster Unionist MPs to call for a No vote. Unionist opponents of the agreement have been particularly enraged by the decision to establish an independent Commission into the future of the RUC. Backed up by the *Daily Telegraph*, which editorialized April 6 that the RUC was the "greatest of British police forces," they have sought to reverse this part of the agreement.

When Blair sought to reassert that the RUC had a future by appointing Christopher Patten, the former British governor of Hong Kong and a Conservative Party leader, to head this "independent" commission, it added fuel to the fire. William Thompson, a dissident Ulster Unionist MP said, "Most Unionists will remember Mr. Patten as he stood lowering the Union Jack on Hong Kong. What we find in Northern Ireland is that the British government are slowly but surely lowering the flag."

Sinn Fein president Adams argued at the Ard Fheis that nationalists need to turn towards this crisis of Unionism. He emphasized, "Sinn Fein is not a Catholic party" and went on to explain, "When we call for the end of the British presence in Ireland, we do not mean our Unionist neighbors. You have as much right to a full and equal life as any other section of our people."

At the conclusion of the Ard Fheis, there was a huge vote in favor of the proposals advanced by the leadership, with 331 of the 350 delegates endorsing their course. Contrary to media speculation, there was no walk out by those who disagreed. Sinn Fein emerged stronger and more unified through responding to the agreement by deepening its fight for self-determination.

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2 class outlooks? — During that McDonald's walkout for dignity in Macedonia, Ohio, a company spokesperson declared: "Our em-



Harry Ring

ployees are our 'special sauce.' We take their concerns very seriously."

And a striker: "We are being treated like ground meat."

Never fails — "Tokyo — Average wages and household spending fell in March, with the country's economic troubles hitting the blue-collar workers the hardest.... The average monthly salary declined for the eighth straight month." — Associated Press.

Uncle still top culture — For the first time since the U.S. military occupation after World War II, the

dollar is again legal tender in Japan.

It really is a great society — On a Maryland school bus, Christine Rhodes, 12, realized a schoolmate was having a severe asthma attack. While the driver was calling for help, she passed over her own prescription inhaler — which classifies her as a "drug trafficker." That will be in her record for three years. School officials did exercise leniency. Rhodes could have also been suspended, but wasn't.

Maybe now they can afford a raise — An Australian supermarket chain has replaced time clocks with fingerprint scanners so employees can't leave a bit earlier and have a co-worker punch them out.

The guesstimate is that it saves about 2 percent of the payroll.

'See you at the track' — A London detective sergeant was accused by an informer of raping her, supplying her with narcotics, and stealing drugs and money. Officials de-

cided the evidence was insufficient, but they did suspend him for three years — with full pay.

Probably so — "The Navy named its newest and most fearsome submarine the *USS Jimmy Carter*....

"Carter said he found no contradiction between lending his name to a nuclear-powered warship and his post-White House career as an international peacemaker." — News item

Communist Manifesto: 150 years of struggle

Below we print excerpts from the article "Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government: 1848 to Today," by Mary-Alice Waters published in the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* no. 3. The article traces the political continuity of the fight for a popular revolutionary dictatorship over the last 150 years, beginning with the lessons incorporated in the 1848 Manifesto of the Communist Party, written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Copyright © 1984 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp. Reprinted with permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

When the political foundations of the modern communist movement were laid, the storm clouds of the approaching 1848 revolutions in Europe were already visible to all classes. At a December 1847 congress in London, a small group of working-class

BOOK OF THE WEEK

revolutionists, mostly German artisans, founded a new international organization, the Communist League. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were assigned to draft its program, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*. This document was published as the first of these revolutionary storm clouds burst over France.

The founding of the league was the product of a political battle waged by Marx, Engels, and their allies. For several years they had worked to win the most conscious working-class revolutionists involved in various secret, conspiratorial societies away from what Marx described as "a hodge-podge" of utopian communist doctrines. They fought to place the revolutionary workers' movement on a scientific, materialist basis. The fundamental dividing line in that conflict was the insistence by Marx and Engels that "it was not a matter of putting some utopian system into effect, but of conscious participation in the historical process revolutionising society before our very eyes."

The initial battle won, the new organization placed at the center of its program the strategic line of march of the working class toward political power. The change fought for by those who agreed with Marx and Engels was reflected in Article I of the "Rules of the Communist League." The original draft had retained the previous utopian

framework. It said: "The League aims at the emancipation of humanity by spreading the theory of the community of property and its speediest possible introduction." The amended version proposed by Marx and Engels and adopted by the congress stated the historic sequence: "The aim of the League is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old bourgeois society which rests on the antagonism of classes, and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property."

The Manifesto adopted by the league explained that the immediate aim of the communists is the "formation of the proletariat into a class" — that is, the development of the proletariat's consciousness of itself as a hereditary social class whose relationship to capital is one of unalterable antagonism. It is a class with distinct interests, and with the capacity to organize itself not only to further its own collective interests, but also to act as a political force leading in alliance with all other exploited producers, thus advancing the interests of toiling humanity as a whole. The aim of communists, continues the Manifesto, is the "overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat."

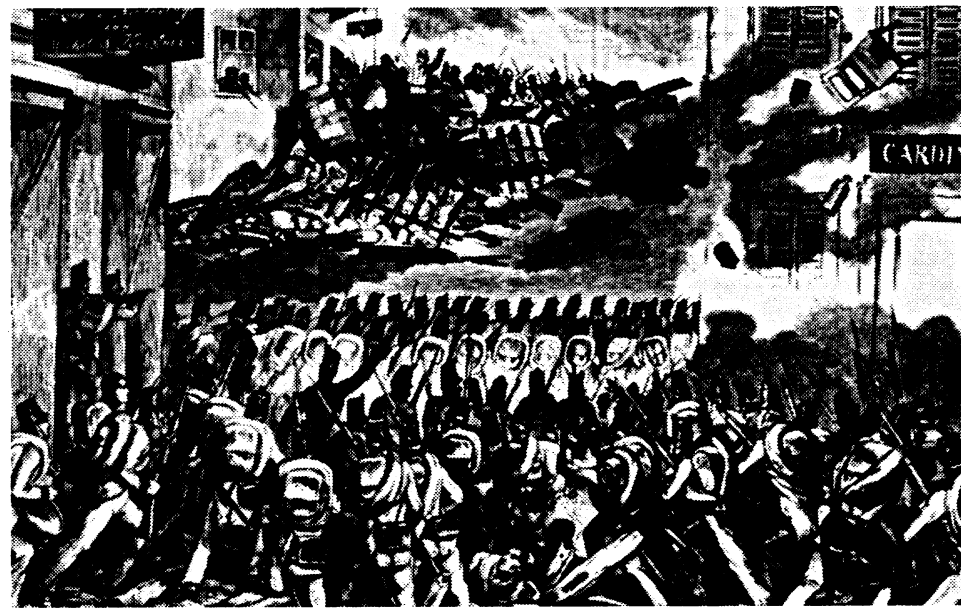
Once the working class has conquered political power, has raised itself to the position of ruling class and won the "battle of democracy," the Manifesto proclaims, it will begin to organize the transition to a new social order. "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."

Of course, the Manifesto declares, "this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property, and on the conditions of bourgeois production." Partial measures, in the course of their development, "outstrip themselves," requiring deeper and deeper inroads upon the old social order "as a means of entirely revolutionising the mode of production."

Once these tasks are accomplished, the political power of the proletariat will have served its purpose and will begin withering away. "When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared," the Manifesto explains, "and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another."

"If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organise itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production," says the Manifesto, "then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class."

"The proletariat alone," explains the Manifesto, "is a really revolutionary class." All preceding ruling classes have been exploiting property-holders, and they have sought to reorganize society so as to protect and enhance their mode of appropriation of society's surplus product, that



The Manifesto was rapidly put to the test in revolutionary action. Above, on the barricades during 1848 revolution in Frankfurt, Germany.

is, the particular way they exploit the working classes. But the workers have no property. "The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and fortify...."

This firmly historical view of the present, materialist basis, and revolutionary class perspectives was new to the proletarian vanguard. Yet, until it was conquered, there could be no advance. Only by understanding that class-divided humanity drives forward through the class struggle itself, regardless of humanity's consciousness (or ignorance) of the underlying economic forces at work; only by understanding that these forces lead inevitably to the social rule of the workers, could the fledgling workers' movement confidently chart a course toward political supremacy. To those

who rejected the new communist movement's scientific understanding of history, in 1848 the perspective proclaimed by its Manifesto seemed preposterous.

"As for myself, I do not claim to have discovered either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them," Marx explained in an 1852 letter to his friend and comrade, Joseph Weydemeyer. "Long before me, bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle between the classes, as had bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes."

"What I did that was new," Marx emphasized, "was 1. to show that the existence of classes is merely bound up with certain historical phases in the development of production; 2. that class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3. that this dictatorship itself only constitutes no more than a transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society."

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



May 25, 1973

May 15 — Revelations coming out in the news media prove that secret U.S. military operations are continuing throughout Indochina. The pattern of lies, deception, and corruption currently being utilized by Nixon in Southeast Asia is the same as what has come to light in the Pentagon papers and in the developing Watergate scandal.

A recent disclosure is that the U.S. embassy in Phnom Penh is functioning as a secret command post for U.S. bombing raids in Cambodia. Nixon has repeatedly lied in claiming that the bombing is executed totally from bases in Thailand and the Pacific. The revelation about the use of the embassy, which came out in a Senate staff report, indicates that Nixon is violating legislation prohibiting the use of U.S. advisors within Cambodia.

Another report cited in the May 8 *New York Post* says that U.S. civilians are being recruited as mercenaries by the Cambodian embassy in Saigon. The *Post* dispatch from Saigon says, "An almost uninterrupted procession of American civilians came to the Cambodian Embassy here yesterday ready to sign up as mercenaries for the Phnom Penh government, despite an embassy denial that U.S. helicopter pilots were being recruited."



May 24, 1948

History was made in the 15 minutes of the Socialist Workers Party presidential campaign program that was broadcast over the NBC national network on May 15, 1948.

For the first time in years, the genuine party of Marxism and Leninism in this country has broken through on a national scale the conspiracy of silence of the monopoly press and radio. For the first time — in a brief 15 minutes — hundreds of thousands of workers, poor farmers and oppressed Negroes learned that there is a party in this country which has the only realistic and effective program against capitalist war, Jim Crow, exploitation and repression.

And the response to the speech of Farrell Dobbs, SWP nominee for President, is striking proof of the tremendous appeal of the international socialist program and the eagerness with which millions will make this program their own, given a chance to learn of the SWP and its platform.

An Iowa student, requesting a copy of Dobbs' speech, correctly assails as a "disgrace" the one-sidedness of the so-called free capitalist press. Certainly, the youth and students of America will get no hope, no light, no truth from the venal intellectuals and the capitalist press. They can turn only to the party of revolutionary Marxism, the Socialist Workers Party.

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No to U.S. sanctions on India!

Working people should condemn Washington's move to impose sanctions on India for testing nuclear bombs. It the imperialist ruling classes, with Washington in the lead, that are the greatest threat to humanity, including their wielding of nuclear weapons. The U.S. government is the only one to have unleashed atomic bombs on people, as it did on the civilian population of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Today the U.S. rulers are tightening their military encirclement of Russia — expanding NATO into Eastern Europe, occupying parts of Yugoslavia, building up military forces in the Middle East, and pushing for greater control all along Russia's southern flank. Nuclear-armed U.S. Minutemen missiles are still being upgraded and aimed at Russian cities. The ultimate aim of these moves is the restoration of the conditions for capitalist exploitation and domination in the Russian workers state, which can only be done through force and violence.

While the bourgeois media howls about New Delhi's weapons, Washington, London, and Paris are strengthening their nuclear arsenals. U.S. president William Clinton signed the so-called test ban treaty, but Washington insists on its prerogative to continue upgrading and testing its arsenal of mass destruction, including nuclear bombs.

As U.S. imperialism sinks its tentacles deeper into powder kegs around the world, its involvement in the sharpening conflicts in the Middle East, Yugoslavia, and Asia point to a greater danger of the use of nuclear weapons today, not a lesser one. Washington has not ruled out using nuclear weapons against the Iraqi people, while maintaining its massive war machine in the Arab-Persian Gulf. World capitalism is today marked by long-term depression conditions and growing social crisis. The sharpening polarization developing in India and Pakistan and growth of rightist forces in both countries is the product of the further disintegration of the old capitalist world order. There will be more proliferation of nuclear weapons and the missiles and planes capable of delivering them. More governments in every part of the world will obtain not only nuclear weapons but also ballistic delivery systems, which each year get cheaper and easier to build.

Only overturning the capitalist system and replacing it with governments of workers and farmers around the globe can put an end to this threat to humanity. Working people in the United States have a particular responsibility to call for the unconditional disarmament of Washington and oppose U.S. sanctions against India and any other nation.

Danish strike: first blow to euro

As the European Union formally approved 11 members of the European Monetary Union and announced that the projected common currency, the euro, will be launched next year, Denmark was shaken by an 11-day strike by a fifth of the country's workforce.

It was not the first general strike in Denmark, let alone in Europe. But the massive workers' action had a different character because it came at a different time. In Europe, southeast Asia, North America, Australia, and elsewhere working people are standing up to the demands for sacrifice by the exploiting classes in a more universal way. At the root of the reaction by those who work for a living and produce (along with nature) all the wealth of society is the growing realization that the world capitalist system is dragging humanity toward intolerable conditions of life and toil. Unemployment levels not seen since the 1930s across the European continent are fueling social polarization and the rise of fascist currents as well. The future for working people is not one of prosperity and democracy but economic misery, Bonapartism, and war.

The acceleration of the resistance by the working class and labor movement is also behind the euro's birth defects. These were revealed by the spat between the two strongest powers within the EU — France and Germany — at the Brussels "euro" meeting, which was supposedly set to register a step away from the conflicts between these armed nation states. The gathering instead confirmed that interimperialist rivalries are intensifying

and that the attempt to create a bloc around the euro as a protection by these powers against Wall Street's dominance in Europe can easily crumble.

The general strike in Denmark gave the rulers of that country and the employing classes across the continent a glimpse of the fights they will increasingly bump into. Hundreds of thousands struck for a sixth paid vacation week — less time to give life and limb for the boss — at a time when employers are demanding the opposite. The government stepped in and imposed the settlement that didn't meet the demand. Most private-sector workers, however, won an additional 2–5 days off per year. This is what the capitalist classes will face more and more in Europe as they attempt to use the euro to justify slashing the social wage, layoffs, and speedup.

The Danish strike coincided with the victorious fight of dock workers in Australia, and spreading labor struggles in the United States and other imperialist countries. Growing layers of workers are gaining self-confidence through these battles and are toning their muscles for the ones to come. Revolutionists must turn to this resistance wholeheartedly. This is high time for organizing solidarity actions through the unions, bringing fighters from around the world in contact with each other — from the teenagers who struck McDonald's in Ohio to Puerto Rican *independentistas*, Irish freedom fighters, and workers in Denmark — and stepping up sales of revolutionary literature with consistency and timeliness.

Hands off Bougainville

Below we reprint major excerpts of a statement issued May 2 by the Communist League in Australia.

All working people should oppose the intervention by Australian military and government forces on Bougainville, which sharply escalated in late April. Their presence is neither neutral nor benign, despite the stated purpose of "monitoring" the "permanent cease-fire" signed April 30. Their real goal is to use military, political, and financial means to block the aspirations of the Bougainvillean people to control their own destiny.

Working people should also oppose Canberra's arrogant campaign through the big-business media to label Bougainvilleans committed to independence and self-determination, such as Francis Ona, as "fanatics" and "potentially dangerous."...

Following the defeat of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) on Bougainville in 1996–97, imperialist military forces intervened in November 1997, as they did unsuccessfully in October 1990 and October 1994, to quell the independence struggle. These forces also stand as a deadly threat to working people in Papua New Guinea. Canberra was "invited" by the PNG government of William Skate to assume command from New Zealand of the four-nation "Peace Monitoring Group" after Wellington announced it was unable to financially sustain the level of its military forces. For the New Zealand military, which provided the command of the operation from November 1997 to the end of April, it was the largest overseas operation since the Vietnam War. The governments of New Zealand, Vanuatu, and Fiji will maintain small numbers on Bougainville....

Bougainville was incorporated into New Guinea in 1898 without the consent of its people. Until independence in 1975 Canberra ruled Papua New Guinea as a colony. Since then Australian corporations — particularly mining companies — have continued to profit from PNG's rich natural resources. The country is a neo-colony of Australian imperialism, and a key form this takes is the massive and

unpayable debt owed to Australian and other imperialist banks. In March 1997 the PNG government of then Prime Minister Julius Chan was deeply shaken by a rebellion in its armed forces and mass mobilisations, which forced him to step aside. This upsurge blocked Chan's decision to employ foreign mercenaries in a new, last-ditch offensive on Bougainville. The conditions of austerity, social crisis, unemployment, hunger, and poverty that fueled the March rebellion remain today.

At the same time as Wellington and Canberra join forces to oppose these freedom fights, they clash with each other as competitors in the race for markets, raw materials, and sources of cheap labour in the region....

The toilers of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea have shaken the basis of imperialist domination with their rebellions. Working people, especially in New Zealand and Australia, have a real stake in their struggles, which further weaken our common enemy — the warmakers and exploiters in Canberra and Wellington. Miners in Australia, confronting a union-busting drive by Rio Tinto, the owner of the Panguna mine, can more easily identify with the aspirations of the people of Bougainville. Wharfies engaged in a battle to defend the right to belong to a trade union, have faced down mercenaries of the same ilk as those Chan tried to use....

Australian and New Zealand military intervention is also aimed at working people at home.... The rulers will use their interference on Bougainville to soften us up, to get us used to the idea that workers, farmers and youth should be sent to intervene militarily in the affairs of other peoples on behalf of Australian and New Zealand big business. But our interests don't lie with "our" governments or rulers....

Australian and other forces out of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea!

PNGDF forces off Bougainville!

Cancel PNG's foreign debt!

No intervention! Independence for Bougainville!

Washington pushes through new sanctions against Belgrade

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Washington and four other imperialist governments approved a ban on investments in Serbia on May 9. The decision to impose new sanctions on Belgrade was announced at the meeting of the G-7 countries plus Russia that took place in Birmingham, England. The meeting included foreign ministers of the so-called Contact Group — made up of the governments of the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, and Russia — that is supposed to oversee implementation of the Dayton accords. That was the agreement Washington forced the warring regimes in Yugoslavia to sign in 1995, setting the stage for the occupation of Bosnia by NATO troops.

The Contact Group has held three previous meetings, imposing an arms embargo on Yugoslavia and freezing Belgrade's assets abroad under the guise of supporting the struggle for national rights of Albanians in Kosova — formally a province of Serbia. Moscow, which okayed the arms embargo but balked at the freezing of assets, opposed the investment ban outright. The government of Japan, which attended the G-7 meeting, said it would study the measure. The governments of France, Germany, Italy, Canada, and the United Kingdom backed Washington on the new sanctions.

In their final communiqué, the foreign ministers of these countries, made clear that they support a measure of autonomy for Kosova within Serbia but not independence — the main demand of the Albanian majority there fighting against national oppression. UK foreign minister Robin Cook also stated that the Contact Group is opposed to the "terrorism" of Albanians in Kosova. He was referring to actions by the Kosova Liberation Army, known by its initials in Albanian as UCK, that has been waging a guerrilla struggle for independence.

The big-business press has been claiming that the UCK is getting aid from radical Muslim groups, as part of the imperialist propaganda campaign to smear those among Kosovar Albanians who do not abide by Washington's rules. "Radical foreign groups, some backed by Iran, are supplying arms to ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)," said an article in the May 8 *Financial Times* of London. "According to western intelligence the KLA is being helped by pro-Iranian mujahideen groups which backed the Bosnian Moslems in the 1992–95 war in Bosnia. KLA access to a wider network could also enable it to open up other fronts, such as terrorism against Serb targets in Belgrade, one official warned."

Meanwhile, Washington dispatched to Belgrade Richard Holbrooke, a banker who was instrumental in crafting the Dayton accords, and U.S. envoy to the Balkans Robert Gelbard. The U.S. officials met with Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to reiterate their demand that Belgrade accept "foreign mediation" in talks with Kosovar Albanians on the province's status and to threaten a deeper intervention by Washington in the area. The Milosevic regime did not budge in its rejection of outside mediation in any negotiations, arguing the conflict in Kosova is an internal matter for Serbia.

NATO officials said in early May they were contemplating a joint exercise with Tirana's military in Albania. On May 7 an unnamed NATO official said the Atlantic military alliance, which is dominated by Washington, was also examining "a range of options that go beyond exercises," according to the *Financial Times* of London. The government of Albania has called for NATO to deploy troops at the Albania-Kosova border.

At the same time, the armed conflict in Kosova — where 90 percent of the population of 2.1 million are Albanians and 8 percent are Serbs — has intensified. The province has been ruled under a state of emergency since 1989 when Belgrade revoked Kosova's autonomous status.

On May 11 Albanian rebels attacked an armored police convoy on a hill overlooking the airport of Pristina, Kosova's capital, about eight miles from the city. No casualties were reported. Belgrade's forces killed at least 18 Albanians that day and the next in Smolicë, a village of Gjakova, and in Klina, Rahovec, and Pristina — bringing the toll to well over 150 Albanians since February 28. That was when Serbian army and police forces launched a crackdown on Albanians demanding self-determination, killing 85 people in two assaults in the Drenica region near Pristina in less than a week. Belgrade's army has also continued a major buildup of troops, tanks, and artillery at the Kosova-Albanian border — claiming that "terrorists" are smuggling weapons for the UCK through that area.

In Pristina and elsewhere in Kosova, daily marches demanding an end to the terror by Belgrade, withdrawal of its special forces, and self-determination for the Albanian nationality have continued uninterrupted for a month. According to the Kosova Information Center, at least 100,000 marched in Pristina and tens of thousands in other cities throughout Kosova on May 9.

Meatpackers fight new lockout in Canada

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards,

Red Deer Advocate quoted Fletcher's chief financial officer, George Paleologou, threatening to sell Fletcher's to Maple Leaf.

ON THE PICKET LINE

working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

RED DEER, Alberta — Dozens of members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1118 picketed in front of Fletcher's Fine Foods hog kill and cut plant here in the early morning hours May 8. The plant is surrounded by a fence topped with barbed wire, which the company hastily erected before locking out more than 600 union workers May 4. Newly hired guards stomped around inside in their combat boots, holding back growling dogs. By 7:00 a.m., the picketers' ranks had swollen to around 200.

As three school buses with boarded up windows approached the lines, the strikers moved to the two sides of the road and begin to chant, "Strike! Strike! Strike! Scab! Scab! Scab!" as the buses rolled through. "Fletcher's has only a dozen or so scabs in there," said Stan Brown. "When we are working we kill about 6,000 pigs a day. That's over the two shifts. They say they are killing 250 now. They are having trouble getting scabs. They have advertised widely, but not many people want to do it."

The unionists rejected the company's "last minute proposal" May 3, affirming by 98.3 percent their April 22 vote to strike, even though the company had floated threats in the press to bring in replacement workers or sell the plant. Then, five hours before the union strike deadline, the company locked out the workers.

Fletcher's has begun making clear its intention to follow the lead of Maple Leaf Foods. In March, Maple Leaf imposed wage cuts of 40 percent along with benefit cuts, following the defeat of a four-month strike by UFCW members in Burlington, Ontario. The April 11

Jamie Giles has worked in the plant for more than six years. She explained what the company offer would mean for her: "My pay is \$15.65 an hour [US\$10.89]. They would cut that to \$10.25 [US\$7.13]. I would lose my seniority and go down to two weeks vacation. And the company wants the right to hire and fire as they see fit."

Fletcher's proposal calls for immediate wage cuts of one third on average and a three-year wage freeze in a six-year contract. In addition, the proposal would reduce workers' vacation time and chop the number of paid holidays from 11 to 9. They would wipe out seniority, having it start again with the contract signing. Duc Nguyen cuts out hog guts on the kill floor. She has worked for Fletcher's for more than seven years. "We can't go with the \$10," she said. She then rubbed her aching shoulders and arms, showing where they are strained from the work. "And we need our vacation time," she added.

In order to entice the unionists to accept concessions, Fletcher's has offered a CAN\$10,000 signing bonus, plus \$50 for each month of service. "They offered us a bone and we spit it back at them," declared striker Ed Michael.

Fletcher's Fine Foods operates the only hog kill operation in Alberta since Maple Leaf closed its Edmonton plant after workers struck it last November.

"Contrary to what the media portrays, we're getting a lot of community support," Ed Michael told the *Militant*. Members of the Canadian Union of Public, the Alberta Nurses Association, and UFCW Local 401 at Safeway have all been out to the picket lines to express their support.

"Workers need to be treated like human beings, not animals and robots," said Omar Hernández Meléndez, who has worked in the plant for 11 years, as he described how the company has pushed workers for more production and harassed workers who spend more than five minutes in the washroom.

Fighting workers head May Day in Montreal

MONTREAL — More than

1,500 workers and students participated in the May Day demonstration here organized jointly by the main trade union federations and two Quebec student organizations. The mood was confident. "It feels like in the '70s," said Patrick Salesse, one of 24 locked-out workers at Montréal-Recherches. "The summer will be hot."

Workers currently involved in labor battles opened the march. The most visible were more than 30 workers dressed like nuns who are among 180 locked out since January by the owners of a old nuns home. One hundred were then laid off after the lockout. "Before we used to be victims of harassment, in particular those of us who are immigrants. Today, we are discovering a great solidarity among us," said Lise Chouinard.

Other strikers included hotel and restaurant workers, employees of funeral homes trying to get their first collective agreement, and several of the 40 members of the United Steelworkers of America at Tecton, who have been on strike since January. There was also a small contingent of McDonald's workers trying to get a union in the restaurant where they work. "We are fighting for better working conditions, but also for respect," said Frédéric, one of the McDonald's employees.

The march through the streets of a Quebecois working-class neighborhood was followed by a celebration.

UK care workers walk out over pay cuts

MANCHESTER, England — A march by striking care workers and their supporters April 25 protested pay cuts in eleven Elderly Persons' Homes in Tameside, Manchester. Of the 400 workers hit, more than 300 have been on strike for five weeks, said Pat Quinn, Helen Graham, and Lyn Woolley, interviewed at the demonstration. They work at the Sunnyside Elderly People's Home, and now picket it from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., they said.

The employer, Tameside Care Group, demands a cut in wages to £4 an hour for nights and £3.75 an hour for day work, from £5.65 and £4.50 respectively. From December 1998, the homes will cease to receive a grant from the national government.

In addition, in April 1998 the Tameside borough council will reduce the payments it makes for each resident to a standard rate, regardless of the level of care they require. "Labour council votes for a cut in fees — so a cut in wages for carers" said one hand-lettered sign at the demonstration.

The strikers are reaching out for support, including at a conference of the Scottish Trades Union Congress in Perth, Scotland.

Marietta steelworkers hold one-week strike

MARIETTA, Ohio — After a one-week strike, members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 4387 voted 69 to 11 accept a three year contract with The Airolite Company on May 3. Workers will get \$.25 per hour wage increases the next three years, but will also have to make contributions to the insurance plan. "There is also a subcontracting clause," under certain circumstances, said Dale Wolfert, a 29-year-old tank room helper. Only about half of the workers were called back to work on May 4. The company says the remaining workers will be called back when production gets back to normal.

The big issue, according to several strikers, was subcontracting. "The company wants to be able to move work and equipment any-

where at any time. That would be the end of the union," said Wolfert, on the fifth day of the strike.

Workers at Airolite make components for building construction, especially louvers for ventilation systems. The plant is located on a hill above the Muskingum River, near where fellow members of the USWA have been on strike against Magnetic Specialty, Inc. since March 2, 1997.

On April 24 the Airolite workers voted 70 to 4 to strike at midnight, when their contract expired. Airolite president Leight Murray has threatened to move the plant in order to lower labor costs. He complains about having to compete against Construction Specialties, Inc. which makes louvers in Mexico.

"Two days or two years. Look at MSI," said Chris Smith, a 20-year-old Airolite worker. Several strikers said the resolve of MSI workers and the solidarity they have won from other workers influenced their decision to strike. Some of the Airolite workers have participated in rallies to support the MSI workers.

Beverly Bernardo, a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), and Jacquie Henderson, a member of the International Association of Machinists, in British Columbia; Michel Dugré, a member of UNITE, and Elssa Martinez, a member of the Communication, Energy and Paperworkers Union, in Montreal; Chris Morris, a member of the Amalgamated Electrical and Engineering Union in Manchester; and Mike Fitzsimmons, member of the USWA in Cleveland, contributed to this column.



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Around 2,000 dock workers and supporters picket Los Angeles dock gates May 9 in solidarity with Maritime Union of Australia. The struggle of the Australian workers against union busting attempt by Patrick Stevedores and the government has been a major topic of discussion among dock workers here. The morning of the picket line the workers in Los Angeles port refused to unload the ship *Columbus Canada*, as it has been loaded by nonunion scab labor in Australia.

— LETTERS —

Back free Kosova protest?

The article "Youth in N.Y. say: 'Freedom for Kosova'" in the May 11 *Militant* presents an April 24 rally in New York rally as a progressive action. I did not attend the rally, but the information provided in the article indicates that the political character of the rally was in fact anticommunist and pro-imperialist. The Albanian American Student Organization called the protest, and "widely distributed" a leaflet that the *Militant* quotes as asking participants in the rally to call the U.S. secretary of state to say "I called to urge for imperative tough actions on Belgrade, to say No to a new BOSNIA!; No more serbo-slav communist hegemony in the Balkans!" The president of the student group, Bleron Baraliu, is quoted as "calling for an immediate U.S. attack on Serbia, 'like they did in Iraq.'" The *Militant* also reports that "a number of the speakers" and "many in the crowd sup-

ported calls...for U.S. military intervention."

While all of these facts are given in the article, they are added at the end after several paragraphs and a photo present the main theme: that high school students and crowds that "spanned several generations" were protesting for "Freedom for Kosova." The article concludes by approvingly quoting a rally organizer, Arta Haxhaj, calling for "Actions, not words" in the fight for Kosovan independence.

But this kind of action does not help working people in Kosova, Yugoslavia or the United States. The *Militant* has consistently printed articles explaining how the imperialists are using Serb terror in Kosova as a pretext for expanding its military intervention in the Balkans. Thousands of imperialist troops are today in Yugoslavia under the cover of "peacekeeping" and stopping the slaughter in Bosnia. Last year thousands of troops were

sent to Albania during the rebellion there, again under the cover of "humanitarian" purposes. Actions that call on the imperialists to get tough on Belgrade and denounce "serbo-slav communism" play into the hands of Clinton and Albright, who are leading the expansion of NATO and are on the lookout for opportunities to use their military might to reimpose capitalism in Eastern Europe and Russia.

Maybe a number of the participants in the rally were interested in the working-class struggles described in the *Militant* and in Pathfinder books. This would be a reason for supporters of the *Militant* to try to find ways to reach these individuals with a communist perspective on the struggle in the Balkans. But this would not be a reason to present the April 24 rally as one to be supported and repeated. There was nothing progressive about this action that linked "Freedom for Kosova" with U.S. military

intervention.
Michael Italie
Atlanta, Georgia

Terminology signifies line

A number of recent *Militant* articles on union struggles have called the workers' adversaries "management." "Northwest management has stepped up its attacks" (issue no. 18). "Tensions between labor and management at Case remain high" (issue no. 16). The editors repeat this phrase in the headline on page 11. A Fletcher Challenge striker is quoted, "Management 'wants to tell you what to do.'" Since management is not in the quotation marks, presumably it was substituted for the striker's words.

I started to notice this only after reading *Letters from Prison* by the *Militant's* founder and longtime editor, James P. Cannon. On page 173 he writes, "While I am on this subject, let me mention that I saw

the expression "management" used in a recent issue of *The Militant*. The right word is employers, or bosses, or blood-sucking exploiters. Terminology signifies line."

Has the *Militant's* line on "management" changed since the days of Cannon? Or has this been an editorial oversight? I haven't done any research to see how long this expression has been back in use.
Kristin Meriam
Birmingham, Alabama

Editor's reply: The *Militant* agrees with Cannon's view on this. Thanks for pointing it out.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

General strike shakes Danish rulers

Government imposes settlement to end walkout by 500,000 workers

BY ANITA ÖSTLING

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Eleven days into a general strike that paralyzed most industry in Denmark, the Social Democratic-led government stepped in to impose a settlement. About half a million workers — a fifth of the country's workforce — were on strike, and tens of thousands more were locked out by the bosses. The main demand was for a sixth week of annual vacation time. The government-imposed contract, which took effect May 7, includes an additional 2-5 days of time off each year to most private-sector industrial workers. Many unionists think this is not enough. Local contract provisions are still being negotiated, as are public workers' contracts.

The work stoppage began April 27, after members of the LO trade union federation voted down a government-mediated deal that had been reached by the bosses and union officials. It was the first general strike in Denmark in 13 years.

Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen announced at a May 6 press conference that he would propose a law to the Folketinget, the Danish parliament, to terminate the strike. In three separate votes the Folketinget adopted the government proposal and the

unionists returned to work. The back-to-work order passed with 95 in favor, 12 opposed and 10 abstentions, with the Social Democrats and all the other major bourgeois parties supporting the measure.

The law is a modified version of the final offer from the government mediator in the negotiations between LO and the Danish Employers Confederation, which was rejected by the union members. That proposal only included one additional holiday — Christmas Eve. Workers considered this an insult, as many already have that day off. The new version includes two more vacation days than the previous contract, plus two extra "care" days off for families with children under 14 the first year and a third day the second year. But to get the two vacation days, a person is required to have worked for the same employer for an uninterrupted nine months. The three "child" days are contingent on having worked for the boss for six months.

The law declares illegal further strikes by the affected workers until March 2000. It cuts the previously proposed increase in pension funds paid by the employers from 0.9 to 0.5 percent of payroll. A tax employers have had to pay to cover sick leave ex-

penses is also abolished. This \$63 million expense is supposed to be taken over by the government.

Many unionists were angry at the government's action. Some 2,000 workers protested outside the Folketinget during the vote on the contract legislation. The workers opposed the government intervention itself, as well as the cuts in employer pension payments and the restrictions on the extra days. Officials of the Union of Special Workers, which organizes unskilled workers, said 40 percent of the union's members don't fulfill time off requirements. A number of meetings between workers and shop stewards have taken place to assess the situation, some resulting in protest letters to the government. LO chairman Hans Jensen predicted there will be further labor protests now as local workplace negotiations begin.

The major big-business papers and spokespeople mostly favored the intervention. A May 7 editorial in *Berlingske Tidene*, a leading daily, called it "a necessary evil," adding, "The government had no alternative but to intervene when the two parties failed."

Others had reservations. An article in *Aktuel* said, "The intervention is expensive and counters the long-term economic strat-

egy of the government that we should work more." The authors warn, "The extra free days will encourage groups in the public sector to make the same demands."

The strike hit the private sector of the economy, and the law covers only those who were on strike. The 50,000 who were locked out and public workers are not covered. "When contracts in the public sector come up for negotiations later the [same] demands will surely be raised," noted an article in the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet*.

The papers have been full of calls for austerity measures following the adoption of the law. For instance *Börsen*, the leading financial daily in Denmark, editorialized May 7, "There is a broad understanding that the intervention increases the demand for fiscal austerity. According to many papers, the government offices are working to present an austerity package for as early as June. The government is also expected to carry through additional austerity measures in its finance plan for next year."

The government is also worried that anger over the imposed strike settlement will spill over into a vote against the Amsterdam Treaty, which modifies the basis of the European Union, in a May 28 referendum.

Elections in Germany spark debate

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

MAGDEBURG, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany — Visiting this eastern German city the day after state elections, the substantial vote for the ultraright German People's Union (DVU) was a major topic of discussion. The fracturing of the main conservative parties and increased political polarization was clear in a visit to the university campus here, and many DVU campaign posters around the city had been overwritten with the words "Nazis out" or "Welcome to the Fourth Reich."

Alexander Mawrodiew, who is from western Germany but is now studying at the university in Magdeburg, commented, "People are not satisfied with the government. It is protest votes." This was a common explanation given as to why the DVU received nearly 13 percent of the vote in the April 26 election. The conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of Chancellor Helmut Kohl dropped sharply, getting only slightly more votes than the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the former ruling party of East Germany. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) got the biggest vote, at 36 percent.

One of the themes of the DVU campaign was to scapegoat immigrants for the nearly 20 percent unemployment rate in eastern Germany. One Iranian student, who did not give his name, said his children have problems at school in Magdeburg because they are bated as foreigners. He is afraid to go into certain areas of the city.

On March 31 of this year, two young thugs broke into a Palestinian's apartment in a public housing project on the fringe of this city. They beat the man as he tried to flee, lacerating his face and feet, and set his bed on fire. The victim was hospitalized.

The number of reported incidents of rightist violence in Germany increased 27 percent in 1997 compared to the year before. Eastern Germany, with only 17 percent of the population, accounted for 45 percent of these attacks.

Two of the students this reporter spoke with said that youth from their campus were organizing to go to an antiracist action in Leipzig May 1, to protest a rally by the ultrarightist German National Democratic Party. Other students echoed the anti-immigrant rhetoric of the DVU.

An April 28 article in the magazine *der Tagesspiegel* quoted Kerstin Helmecke, the last in the list of 16 DVU candidates who won seats in the Saxony-Anhalt. She argued, "We're not Nazis. I just want to be a voice

of the people.... Here you see Albanians and Russians driving new BMWs and Audis." She said that since the reunification of Germany she has had low paid jobs or been unemployed. Her husband is a member of an DVU outfit "The League to Honor Rudel," referring to a Nazi fighter pilot in World War II and a prominent figure for the ultraright here until his death in 1982.

Eberhard Lehnert said he learned he was a DVU candidate from reading it in the paper, and resigned soon after the election.

CDU feeds anti-immigrant chauvinism

Wolfgang Schäuble the chairman of the parliamentary fraction of CDU and Christian Social Union (CSU), its conservative sister party in Bavaria, responded to the Saxony-Anhalt election results in an interview in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* May 2. "We should not engage in a competition with the extreme forces," Schäuble. But he spoke for stopping immigrants from moving to certain areas, and said "the causes of immigration have to be fought."

German minister of finance Theodor Waigel, who is also the leader of the CSU, described the elections in Saxony-Anhalt as "a clear warning. Now the themes of immigration and law and order must be put at the center of our election campaign."

There is a dispute within CDU in Berlin over Kreuzberg, an area of the city where 40 percent of the inhabitants are immigrants. A wing of the party is demanding that more immigrants should not be allowed to move into Kreuzberg, and that Berlin should be "shaped by German traditions."

Deportations of immigrants, especially to Bosnia, and further restrictions on the right to asylum in Germany have been important features of government policy in Germany in the last few years, giving space for ultraright currents.

In the aftermath of the elections in Saxony-Anhalt, the Social Democratic Party is in crisis over what kind of state government to form. Since 1994, there had been a minority coalition government between the Greens and SPD in Saxony-Anhalt, which was tolerated by the PDS. Since the Greens didn't get the 5 percent vote needed to be seated in the state parliament this time, the SPD is without coalition partner.

Helmut Kohl has stated that CDU should focus in its election campaign against a possible "red-green" coalition government.

SPD Chancellor candidate Gerhard Schröder already on April 26, the day of the

elections in Saxony-Anhalt, said that a "grand coalition" between the SPD and CDU was the only answer to the government question in that state. Schröder also expressed concerns over some kind of cooperation between SPD and PDS.

Both CDU and SPD have tried to undercut the influence of PDS by labeling it "left extremist," equal to "right extremist" forces like the DVU. But eight years after reunification, the PDS still gets about 20 percent of the votes in the eastern German states, tapping into anger over the deteriorating conditions for working people in the former German Democratic Republic.

Recently CDU leader in Nordrhein-Westfalen Norbert Lammert criticized the president of Bundestag, Rita Süssmuth, and Paul Krüger, a prominent CDU politician in the eastern states, after they participated in a TV show with the PDS politician Gregor Gysi.

Under pressure from Schröder and the national leadership of the SPD, Reinhard Höppner, the leader of SPD in Saxony-Anhalt, began talks April 28 with the CDU on the formation of a coalition government. The move caused tensions within the SPD parliamentary group in Saxony-Anhalt. The leader of the parliamentary group, Jens Bullerjahn, told the Magdeburg paper *Volksstimme*, "I am elected by the people here in Saxony-Anhalt, not by Bonn."

On May 12, Höppner announced he will form a minority government without the CDU.

Workers resist austerity push

The SPD and CDU may consider a "grand coalition" on a national level, if neither gains a big victory in the September parliamentary vote. They aim to carry out a bipartisan push for some of the attacks on working people that have been stalled since last year. A "tax reform" and further cuts in pensions, sick leave payments, and education are on the agenda for the ruling class.



Demonstration of several hundred people against unemployment outside the stock exchange in Berlin May 8. Sign reads: "Share Work Fairly."

But resistance to these attacks runs deep among workers and students in Germany.

Negotiations for 161,000 railroad workers have broken off and gone into arbitration. A railroad worker who spoke to *Militant* correspondents at the May Day event organized by the DGB union federation in Berlin said, "We need to do what they did in Denmark this week and in France several years ago — shut the railroad down. When we go on strike they try to whip up opposition to us, but we have a right to strike."

The more than 300,000 construction workers in eastern Germany have also broken off negotiations with the employers, who claim they can't afford a 1.5 percent wage increase.

On May 7 the monthly protest against unemployment drew a total of 60,000 people in actions in hundreds of towns around the country.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metalworkers union in Södertälje, Sweden.